

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND ART

Horizon

EDITED BY CYRIL CONNOLLY

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HORIZON

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OUR SUMMER COMPETITION

THE lesson of *The Loved One* (HORIZON, February) remains to be pointed out. The phenomenal success of Mr. Waugh's short novel proves that the apathy of the reading public about which editors and publishers complain is largely illusory. Once cracked open by a new stimulus the public rushes to buy—even down to the philistine fringe. Let us make the fatal mistake of trying to repeat a success. HORIZON proposes to devote the entire November issue to a single contribution. For this contribution it offers an initial fee of one hundred and twenty five pounds. Any readers of HORIZON who feel inclined are earnestly invited to contribute a further donation to the prize money. The length of the contribution should be between thirty and thirty-five thousand words: it can be in any form and on any subject from any country, but must be submitted in English. HORIZON claims no proprietary rights in the winning entry and stipulates only that where the manuscript of an already completed book is submitted the book shall not have appeared before 1949. All entries must be submitted by 15 September.

So three summer months now lie ahead, O gentlest of readers, in which to produce a little masterpiece. Ten thousand words a month for another *Candide*, a *Sentimental Journey*, a *Sylvie*, a *Tale of a Tub*, *Urn Burial*, *Communist Manifesto* or *Daisy Miller*! The object of the competition is threefold.

1. To entertain and stimulate our readers in November as satisfactorily as in last February.
2. To discover a writer who has the magic gift of creating something fresh and new.
3. To revive interest in the short book.

Although HORIZON does not presume to tell people what to write about, the intending competitor may learn from a study of this three-fold objective what to avoid. First, ten thousand

readers have to be entertained; they cannot be given a whole number devoted to Ariosto or George Eliot or Joyce or Kierkegaard—the fringe would rebel. But I can imagine some brilliant new broom sweeping through contemporary writers and holding our readers' attention. In this competition the dice are perhaps a little loaded against the poet, essayist or critic in favour of the novelist, dramatist, biographer or autobiographer. Secondly, originality is demanded: we are looking for something from whatever source with a peculiar freshness of its own, something which makes us feel that 1948, though worse than 1928, is a good deal better than 1938, that a post-war literature is emerging and that the clock has not entirely stood still. And lastly, reviving the short book doesn't mean that we want to publish the first third of a long book or some old essays tied together with a reviewer's hack-splice.

From time to time HORIZON will announce any increases in the prize money and encourage competitors in every way, but we shall have no hesitation in abandoning the project if nothing outstanding comes in. It doesn't matter whether you are old and famous, young and unknown, English, American, African, European, Asiatic; just keep within the word limits and send in something perfectly constructed, perfectly moving, and word-perfect, a summer rainbow to make us believe that the gods are not deserting their bitter little hairy experiment—western man.

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The pictures are back in the Gallery; Old Masters twirl their
cadenzas, whisper and shout,
Hundreds of windows are open again on a vital but changeless
world—a day dream free from doubt.

Here are the angels playing their lutes at the Birth—
Clay become porcelain; the pattern, the light, the ecstasy which
make sense of the earth;
Here is Gethsemane scooped like a glacier, here is Calvary calmly
assured of its own worth.

Here are the gold haloes, opaque as coins,
The pink temple of icing-sugar, the blandly scalloped rock which
joins
Primitive heaven and earth; here is our Past wiping the smuts
from his eyes, girding his loins.

Here saint may be gorgeous, hedonist austere,
The soul's nativity drawn of the earth and earthy, our brother the
Ass being near,
The petty compartments of life thrown wind-wide open, our
lop sided instincts and customs atoned for here.

Here only too have the senses unending joy:
Draperies slip but slip no further and expectation cannot cloy;
The great Venetian buttocks, the great Dutch bosoms, remain in
their time—their prime—beyond alloy.

And the Painter's little daughter, far-off-eyed,
Still stretches for the cabbage white, her sister dawdling at her
side;
That she grew up to be mad does not concern us, the idyl and the
innocent poise abide.

Aye; the kings are back from their caves in the Welsh hills,
Refreshed by darkness, armed with colour, sleight-of-hand and
imponderables,
Armed with Uccello's lances, with beer-mugs, dragons' tongues,
peacocks' eyes, bangles and spangles and flounces and frills;

Armed with the full mystique of the commonplace,
 The lusts of the eye, the gullet, the loins, the memory—grace after
 living and grace
 Before some plain-clothes death grabs at the artist's jemmy,
 leaves us yet one more half-solved case.

For the quickness of the heart deceives the eye,
 Reshuffling the themes: a Still Life lives while portrayed flesh and
 feature die
 Into fugues and subterfuges of being as enveloping and as aloof as
 a frosty midnight sky.

So fling wide the windows, this window and that, let the air
 Blowing from times unconfined to Then, from places further and
 fuller than There,
 Purge our particular time-bound unliving lives, rekindle a pente-
 cost in Trafalgar Square.

LAWRENCE DURRELL
 STUDIES IN GENIUS: VI
 GRODDECK

IF the work and teachings of Georg Walther Groddeck (1866–1934) are not as well known today as they deserve to be it is perhaps largely his own fault. His first job, he considered, was to heal; the writer and the teacher took second place. Over and above this Groddeck also knew how quickly the disciple can convert the living word into the dead canon. He knew that the first disciple is also very often the first perverter of the truth. And this knowledge informs his written work with that delightful self-deprecating irony which so many of his readers profess to find out of place; an irony which says very clearly 'I am not inviting you to follow me, but to follow yourself. I am only here to help if you need me.' The age does need its Groddecks, and will continue to need them until it can grasp the full majesty and terror of the 'It' which he has talked so much about in his various books, and particularly in that neglected masterpiece *The Book of the It*.

In considering Groddeck's place in psychology, however, there are one or two current misunderstandings which deserve to be cleared up for the benefit of those who have mistaken, or continue to mistake, him for an orthodox disciple of Freud. Groddeck was the only analyst whose views had some effect on Freud; and Freud's *The Ego and the Id* are a tribute to, though unfortunately a misinterpretation of, Groddeck's It theory. Yet so great was his admiration for Freud that the reviewer might well be forgiven who once described him as 'a popularizer of Freudian theory'. No statement, however, could be farther from the truth, for Groddeck, while he accepts and employs much of the heavy equipment of the master, is separated for ever from Freud, by an entirely different conception of the constitution and functioning of the human psyche. His acknowledgements to Freud begin and end with those wonderful discoveries on the nature of the dream, on the meaning of resistance and transference. In his use of these great conceptual instruments, however, Groddeck was as different from Freud as Lao Tzu was from Confucius. He accepted and raised them as great discoveries of the age: he employed them as weapons in his own way upon organic disease: he revered Freud as the greatest genius of the age: but fundamentally he did not share Freud's views upon the nature of the forces within the human organism which make for health or sickness. And this is the domain in which the doctrines of Groddeck and of Freud part company. In this domain, too, Groddeck emerges as a natural philosopher, as incapable of separating body and mind as he is incapable of separating health and disease.

To Freud the psyche of man was made up of two halves, the conscious and the unconscious parts; but for Groddeck the whole psyche with its inevitable dualisms seemed merely a function of something else—an unknown quantity—which he chose to discuss under the name of the 'It'. 'The sum total of an individual human being,' he says, 'physical, mental, and spiritual, the organism with all its forces, the microcosmos, the universe which is a man, I conceive of as a self unknown and forever unknowable, and I call this the "It" as the most indefinite term available without other emotional or intellectual associations. The It-hypothesis I regard not as a truth—for what do any of us know about absolute truth?—but as a useful tool in work and in life; it has stood the test of years of medical work and experiment and so far nothing

has happened which would lead me to abandon it or even to modify it in any essential degree. I assume that man is animated by the It which directs what he does and what he goes through, and that the assertion "I live" only expresses a small and superficial part of the total experience "I am lived by the It" . . .

This fundamental divergence of view concerning the nature of health and disease, the nature of the psyche's role, is something which must be grasped at the outset if we are to interpret Groddeck to ourselves with any accuracy. For Freud, as indeed for the age and civilization of which he was both representative and part, the ego is supreme. There it lies, like an iron-shod box whose compartments are waiting to be arranged and packed with the terminologies of psycho-analysis. But to Groddeck the ego appeared as a contemptible mask fathered on us by the intellect, which by imposing upon the human being, persuaded him that he was motivated by forces within the control of his conscious mind. Yet, asks Groddeck, what decides how the food which passes into the stomach is subdivided? What is the nature of the force which decrees the rate of the heart-beat? What persuaded the original germ to divide and subdivide itself and to form objects as dissimilar as brain cortex, muscle, or mucus?

'When we occupy ourselves in any way either with ourselves or with our fellow-man, we think of the ego as the essential thing. Perhaps, however, for a little time we can set aside the ego and work a little with this unknown It instead . . . We know, for instance, that no man's ego has had anything to do with the fact that he possesses a human form, that he is a human being. Yet as soon as we perceive in the distance a being who is walking on two legs we immediately assume that this being is an ego, that he can be made responsible for what he is and what he does, and, indeed if we did not do this everything that is human would disappear from the world. Still we know quite certainly that the humanity of this being was never willed by his ego; he is human through an act of will of the All, or, if you go a little further, of the It. The ego has not the slightest thing to do with it . . . What has breathing to do with the will? We have to begin as soon as we leave the womb, we cannot choose but breathe. "*I love you so dearly, could do anything for you.*" Who has not felt that, heard it, or said it? But try to hold your breath for the sake of your love. In ten seconds, or at most in a quarter of a minute, the proof of your

we will disappear before the hunger for air. No one has command over the power to sleep. It will come or it will not. No one can regulate the beating of the heart . . .'

Man, then, is himself a function of this mysterious force which expresses itself through him, through his illness no less than his health. To Groddeck the psycho-analytic equipment was merely means by which one might see a little more deeply than heretofore into the mystery of the human being—as an It-self. Over the theory of psycho-analysis, as he used it, therefore, stood the metaphysical principle which expressed itself through man's behaviour, through his size, shape, beliefs, wants. And Groddeck set himself up as a watchman, and where possible, as an interpreter of this mysterious force. The causes of sickness or health he decided were unknown; he had already remarked in the course of his long clinical practice that quite often the same disease was overcome by different treatments, and had been finally led to believe that disease as an entity did not exist, except inasmuch as it was an expression of a man's total personality, his It, expressing itself through him. Disease was a form of self-expression.

However unlikely it may seem, it is nevertheless a fact that any sort of treatment, scientific or old-wife's poultice, may turn out to be right for the patient, since the outcome of medical or other treatment is not determined by the means prescribed but by what the patient's It likes to make of the prescription. If this were not the case then every broken limb which had been properly set and bandaged would be bound to heal, whereas every surgeon knows of obstinate cases which despite all care and attention defy his efforts and refuse to heal. It is my opinion, backed by my experience with cases of this nature, that a beneficent influence may be directed upon the injured parts . . . by psycho-analysing the general Unconscious, indeed I believe that every sickness of the organism, whether physical or mental, may be influenced by psycho-analysis . . . Of itself psycho-analysis cannot prove its value in every department of medicine, although of course a man with pneumonia must be put immediately to bed and kept warm, a gangrened limb must be amputated, a broken bone set and immobilized. A badly built house may have to be pulled down and reconstructed with all possible speed when no alternative accommodation is available, and the architect who built it so badly must be made to see his mistakes . . . and an It

which has damaged its own work, lung, or bone, or whatever it may be, must learn its lesson and avoid such mistakes in future . . .

'Since everything has at least two sides, however, it can always be considered from two points of view, and so it is my custom to ask a patient who has slipped and broken his arm: "*What was your idea in breaking your arm?*" whereas if anyone is reported to have had recourse to morphia to get sleep the night before, I ask him: "*How was it the idea of morphine became so important yesterday that you make yourself sleepless, in order to have an excuse for taking it?*" So far I have never failed to get a useful reply to such questions, and there is nothing extraordinary about that, for if we take the trouble to make the search we can always find an inward and an outward cause for any event in life.'

The sciences of the day have devoted almost the whole of their interest to the outward cause; they have not as yet succeeded in escaping from the philosophic impasse created by the natural belief in causality, and side by side with this a belief in the ego as being endowed with free-will. In all the marvellous pages of Freud we feel the analytical intellect pursuing its chain of cause—and effect; if only the last link can be reached, if only the first cause can be established, the whole pattern will be made clear. Yet for Groddeck such a proposition was false; the Whole was an unknown, a forever unknowable entity, whose shadows and functions we are. Only a very small corner of this territory was free to be explored by the watchful, only the fringes of this universe lay within the comprehension of the finite human mind which is a function of it. Thus while Freud speaks of cure Groddeck is really talking of something else—liberation through self-knowledge; and his conception of disease is philosophical rather than rational. In the domain of theory and practice he is Freud's grateful and deeply attentive pupil, but he is using Freud for ends far greater than Freud himself could ever perceive. Psycho-analysis has been in danger of devoting itself only to the tailoring of behaviour, too heavily weighted down by its superstructure of clinical terminology it has been in danger of thinking in terms of medical entities rather than patients. This is the secret of Groddeck's aversion to technical phrases, his determination to express himself as simply as possible using only the homely weapons of analogy and comparison to make his points. In *The Book of the It*, which is cast in the form of letters to a friend, he discusses

the whole problem of health and disease from a metaphysical point of view, and with an ironic refusal to dogmatize or tidy his views into a system. But the book itself, brimming over with gay irony and poetry, does succeed in circumscribing this territory of experience with remarkable fidelity; and from it Groddeck emerges not only as a great doctor but also as a philosopher whose concept is positively ancient Greek in its clarity and depth. 'In *Ein*', says Freud somewhere, 'does Groddeck protest that he has nothing to do with science.' Yes, in vain, for Groddeck's findings are being daily called upon to supplement the mechanical findings of the science which he respected, but of which he refused to consider himself a part. 'Health and sickness', he says, 'are among the forms of expression, always ready for use. Consideration of these two modes of expression reveals the remarkable fact that It never uses either of them alone, but always both at once: that is to say, no one is altogether ill, there is always some part which remains sound even in the worst illnesses; and no one is altogether well, there is always something wrong, even in the perfectly healthy. Perhaps the best comparison we could give would be a pair of scales. The It toys with the scales, now putting the weight in the right pan, now in the left, but never leaving either an empty; this game, which is often puzzling but always significant, never purposeless, is what we know as life. If once the It loses its interest in the game, it lets go of life and dies. Death is always voluntary; no one dies except he has desired death . . . It is ambivalent, making mysterious but deep-meaning play with will and counter-will, with wish and counter-wish, driving the sick man into a dual relation with his doctor so that he loves him as his best friend and helper, yet sees in him a menace to that artistic effort, his illness.'

The illness, then, bears the same relation to the patient as does his handwriting, his ability to write poetry, his ability to make money; creation, whether in a poem or a cancer, was still creation, for Groddeck, and the life of the patient betrayed for him the language of a mysterious force at work under the surface—behind the ideological scaffolding which the ego had run up around itself. Disease, then, had its own language no less than health, and when the question of the cure came up, Groddeck insisted on approaching his patient, not to meddle with his 'disease' but to try and interpret what his It might be trying to express through

the disease. The cure, as we have seen above, is for Groddeck always a result of having influenced the It, of having taught it a less painful mode of self-expression. The doctor's role is that of a catalyst, and more often than not his successful intervention is an accident. Thus the art of healing for Groddeck was a sort of spiritual athletic for both doctor and patient, the one through self-knowledge learning to cure his It of its maladjustments, the other learning from the discipline of interpretation how to use what Graham Howe has so magnificently called 'The will-power of desireless': in other words, how to free himself from *the desire to cure*. This will seem a paradox only to those—and today they are very many—who have no inkling of what it is like to become aware of states outside the comfortable and habitual drowsings of the ego. We are still the children of Descartes, and it is only here and there you will find a spirit who dares to replace that inexorable first proposition, with the words: 'I am, therefore I can love.'

It was this dissatisfaction with the current acceptance of disease as clinical entity that drove Groddeck finally to abandon, wherever possible, recourse to the pharmacopoeia or the knife; in his little clinic in Baden-Baden he preferred to work with a combination of diet, deep massage, and analysis as his surest allies. On these years of successful practice his reputation as a doctor was founded, while his writings, with their disturbing, disarming, mocking note, brought him as many pupils as patients, as many enemies as admirers. The majority of his theories and opinions, together with the It-concept on which his philosophy is based, were already worked out before he had read Freud. Yet he gladly and joyfully accepted the Freudian findings in many cases, and never ceased to revere Freud; but whereas the work of Jung, Adler, Rank, Stekel, might well be considered as modifications and riders to basic Freudian theory, Groddeck's case is unique and exceptional. He stands beside Freud as a philosopher and healer in his own true right.

'With Groddeck', wrote Keyserling after his death, 'has gone one of the most remarkable men I have ever met. He is indeed the only man I have known who continually reminded me of Lao-Tzu; his non-action had just the same magical effect. He took the view that the doctor really knows nothing, and of himself can do nothing, that he should therefore interfere as little as possible

For his very presence can invoke to action the patient's own powers of healing. Naturally he could not run his sanatorium at Baden-Baden purely on this technique of non-intervention, so he healed his patients by a combination of psychotherapy and massage which the pain he inflicted must have played some part in the cure, for in self-protection they developed the will-to-life, while the searching questions he put in analysis often touched them on the raw! . . . In this way Groddeck cured me in less than a week of a relapsing phlebitis which other doctors had warned me would keep me an invalid for years, if not for the rest of my life.' For the patient Groddeck sought to interpret, through the vagaries of outward symptom and clinical manifestation, the hidden language of the It; 'I do maintain', he writes, 'that man creates his own illnesses for a definite purpose, using the outer world merely as an instrument, finding there an inexhaustible supply of material which he can use for this purpose, today a piece of orange peel, tomorrow the spirochete of syphilis, the day after a draught of cold air, or anything else that will help him to fill up his woes. And always to gain pleasure, no matter how unlikely that may seem, for every human being experiences something of pleasure in suffering; every human being has the feeling of guilt and tries to get rid of it by self-punishment.' To Groddeck mainly the ego is only a reflexive instrument to be used as a help in interpreting the motive force which lies behind the actions and reactions of the whole man; it is perhaps this which gives his philosophy its bracing life-giving quality. It is a philosophy with boundless horizon, whereas the current usages of psycho-analysis mainly show it to have been built upon a cosmogony as limited in scope as that which bounded the universe of Kelvin or of Huxley. Freud gives us a calculus for the examination of behaviour, the philosophy on which it rests is a philosophy of causes; to Groddeck, however, all causes derive from an unknowable principle which animates our lives and actions. So we are saved from the hubris of regarding ourselves as egos and of limiting our view of man to the geography of his reflexes; by regarding the ego as a function we can reorientate ourselves more easily to the strains and stresses of a reality which too often the ego rejects, because it cannot comprehend, or because it fears it. So much, then, for the basic difference between the philosophies of Freud and Groddeck; it will be evident, if I have stated my case clearly, that

they complement one another, that they are not antithetical, as some have believed them to be; for Freud supplies much of the actual heavy machinery of analysis, and Groddeck joyfully accepts it. In return Groddeck offers a philosophy of orientation and humility which justifies the technocratic contributions of Freud and allows us to understand more clearly the problems and penalties not merely of disease, for that does not exist *per se*—but of suffering itself. With Freud we penetrate more deeply into the cognitive process; with Groddeck we learn the mystery of participation with the world of which we are part, and from which our ego has attempted to amputate us.

And what of the It? Groddeck does not claim that there is any such thing. He is most careful to insist that the It is not a thing-in-itself, but merely a way-of-seeing, a convenient rule-of-thumb method for attacking the real under its many and deceptive masks; indeed in this his philosophy bears a startling resemblance to the Tao-concept of the Chinese. The It is a way, not a thing, not a principle or a conceptual figment. Having accepted so much, Groddeck is prepared to attempt a half-length portrait of it.

'Some moment of beginning must be supposed for this hypothetical It, and for my own purposes I quite arbitrarily suppose it to start with fertilization . . . and I assume that the It comes to an end with the death of the individual—though the precise moment at which we can say an individual is dead is again not so simple a matter as it seems . . . Now the hypothetical It-unit, whose origin we have placed at fertilization, contains within itself two It-units, a male and a female . . . It is perhaps necessary here to comment upon the extent of our ignorance concerning the further development of the fertilized ovule. For my purposes it is sufficient to say that after fertilization the egg divides into two separate beings, two cells as science prefers to call them. These two then divide again into four, into eight, into sixteen and so on, until finally there comes to be what we commonly designate as a human being . . . Now in the fertilized ovule, minute as it is, there must be something or other—the It, we have assumed?—which is able to take charge of this multitudinous dividing into cells, to give them all distinctive forms and functions, to induce them to group themselves as skin, bones, eyes, ears, brain, etc. What becomes of the original It in the moment of division? It must obviously impart its powers to the cells into which it divides

nce we know that each of them is able to exist and re-divide independently of the other . . . It must not be forgotten that the It, and therefore the intellect, is itself created by the It . . . Long before the brain comes into existence the It of man is already active and "thinking" without the brain, since it must first construct the brain before it can use it to think with. This is a fundamental point and one we are inclined to ignore or forget. The assumption that one thinks only with the brain is to be found the origin of a thousand and one absurdities, the origin also of many valuable discoveries and inventions, much that adorns life and much that makes it ugly . . . Over and against the It there stands the ego, the I, which I take to be merely the tool of the It, but which we are forced by nature to regard as the It's master; whatever we say in theory there remains always for us men the final verdict "I am I" . . . We cannot get away from it, and even while I assert the proposition is false I am obliged to act as if it were true. Yet I am, by no means, I, but only a continuously changing form in which my "It" displays itself, and the "I" feeling is just one of its ways of deceiving the conscious mind and making a pliant tool . . . I go so far as to believe that every single separate cell has this consciousness of individuality, every tissue, every organic system. In other words every It-unit can deceive itself, if it likes, into thinking of itself as an individuality, a person, an I. This is all very confusing but there it is. I believe that the human mind has its I, that it knows what it does, and knows that it knows. And every kidney-cell and every nail-cell has its consciousness just the same . . . its "I" consciousness. I cannot prove this, of course, but as a doctor I believe it, for I have seen how the stomach can respond to certain amounts of nourishment, how it makes careful use of its secretion according to the nature and quantity of the material supplied to it, how it uses eye, nose and mouth in selecting what it will enjoy. This "I" which I postulate for cells, organs, etc., like the general-I (or the ego-awareness of the whole man) is by no means the same thing as the It, but is produced by the It, as a mode of expression on all fours with a man's gestures, speech, voice, thinking, building, etc. . . . About the It itself we can know nothing.'

At this point the orthodox objections of the Rationalist deserve to be stated and considered. They are questions which Groddeck himself did not bother to answer, believing as he did that no

hypothesis could be made to cover all the known facts of a case without special pleading or sophistry, and being unwilling to strain for interpretations which might appear to cover the whole of reality and yet in truth yield only barren formulae. Groddeck believed that whatever was posited as fact could sooner or later be disproved; hence his caution in presenting the It-hypothesis not as a truth, but as a method. Yet a critic of the proof-of-the-pudding school would have every right to ask questions along the following lines: 'That a case of inoperable cancer, say, which defies every other form of treatment, can be made to yield before a Groddeckian attack by massage and analysis, is within the bounds of belief. Even the It-hypothesis might be conceded as a useful working tool in this case. Freud has so far altered the boundaries between the conscious and unconscious intention that we are inclined to respond to suggestions which fifty years ago would have seemed fantastic. But if a thousand people contract typhoid from a consignment of fruit are we to assume that the individual It of each and every one of them has chosen this form of self-expression in a desire for self-punishment?' It is the sort of question to which you will find no answer in Groddeck's books; yet if he seems content to present the It as a partial hypothesis it is because his major interest is in its individual manifestation. Yet there is nothing in the hypothesis as such to preclude a wider application. Had he addressed himself to such a question he might very easily have asserted that just as the cell has its It-ego polarity, and the whole individual his, so also could any body or community develop its own. The conventions of the logic that we live by demand that while we credit the individual with his individuality we deny such a thing to concepts such as 'state', 'community', 'nation'—concepts which we daily use as thought-counters. Yet when our newspapers speak of a 'community decimated by plague' or a 'nation convulsed by hysteria' we accept the idea easily enough, though our consciousness rejects these formations as fictions. Yet in time of war a nation is treated as an individuality with certain specified characteristics; politicians 'go to the nation'. *The Times* discusses the 'Health of the Nation' with the help of relevant statistics. This unity which we consider a fiction—could it not reflect, in its component parts, the shadows of the individual unity, which is, according to Groddeck, no less a fiction? If a national ego why not a national It? But I am aware that in

widening the sphere of application for the It-hypothesis I am perhaps trespassing: for if Groddeck himself remained silent on the score he no doubt had his reasons.

And what of the domain of pure accident or misadventure? A man hurt by a falling wall? The victim of a railway accident? Are we to assume that his It has made him a victim of circumstances? We know next to nothing about predisposition—yet it is a term much used by medical men to cover cases where the link of causality appears obvious, the effect related satisfactorily to the cause; thus the victim of hereditary syphilis satisfies the syntax of our logic, while the victim of a railway accident seems simply the passive object of fate. And yet we do unconsciously recognize predisposition in individuals, in our friends, for how often when the news of the accident reaches us, do we exclaim: 'But it *would* happen to someone like X'? The truth is that all relations between events and objects in this world partake of the mystery of the unknown, and we are no more justified in covering one set of events with words like 'disease' or 'illness', than we are of dismissing another with words like 'accident' or 'coincidence'. Groddeck himself was too wily a metaphysician to put himself at the mercy of words. 'I should tell you something', he writes, 'of the onset of diseases, but the truth is that on this subject I know nothing. And about their cure . . . Of that, too, I know just nothing at all. I take both of them as given facts. At the utmost I can say something about the treatment, and that I will do now. The aim of the treatment, of all medical treatment, is to gain some influence over the It . . . Generally speaking, people have been content with the method called "symptomatic treatment" because it deals with the phenomena of disease, the symptoms. And nobody will assert that they were wrong. But we physicians, because we are forced by our calling to play at being God Almighty, and consequently to entertain overwhelming ideas, long to invent a treatment which will do away not with the symptoms but with the cause of the disease. We want to develop causal therapy as we call it. In this attempt we look around for a cause, and first theoretically establish . . . that there are apparently two essentially different causes, an inner one, *causa interna*, which the man contributes of himself, and an outer one, *causa externa*, which springs from his environment. And accepting this clear distinction we have thrown ourselves with

raging force upon the external causes, such as bacilli, chills, overheating, overdrinking, work, and anything else . . . Nevertheless in every age there have always been physicians who raised their voices to declare that man himself produced his diseases, that in him are to be found the *causae internae* . . . There I have my jumping-off point. One cannot treat in any way but causally. For both ideas are the same; no difference exists between them . . . In truth I am convinced that in analysing I do no differently than I did before when I ordered hot baths, gave massage, issued masterful commands, all of which I still do. The new thing is merely the point of attack in the treatment, *the one symptom which appears to me to be there in all circumstances, the "I"* . . . My treatment . . . consists of the attempt to make conscious the unconscious complexes of the "I" . . . That is certainly something new, but it originated not with me, but with Freud; all that I have done in this matter to apply the method to organic diseases, because I hold the view that the object of all medical treatment is the It: and I believe the It can be influenced as deeply by psychoanalysis as It can by a surgical operation.'

If we have spent much time and space in letting Groddeck, as far as possible in his own words, define and demarcate the territory of the It, the reason should by now be apparent. Not only is the ego-It polarity the foundation-stone upon which his philosophy is built, but without an understanding of it we cannot proceed to frame the portrait of this poet-philosopher-doctor with any adequacy; since his views concerning the function and place of the ego in the world are carried right through, not only in his study of health and disease, but also into the realms of art-criticism and cosmology, where his contributions are no less original and beautiful. Groddeck, like Rank, began as a poet and writer, only to turn aside in middle life and embrace the role of healer; lack of first-hand acquaintance with Groddeck's poetry, his one novel, and what his translator describes as 'an epic', prevents me from saying anything about this side of his activities; but in his one incomplete volume of art-criticism, published here under the title of *The World of Man*, the reader will be able to follow Groddeck's study of painting in terms of the It-process—for he believed that man creates the world in his own image, that all his inventions and activities, his science, art, behaviour, language and so on, reflect very clearly the nature of his primitive

experience, no less than the confusion between the ego and the It which rules his thoughts and actions. Unfortunately his death in 1934 prevented him from carrying out more than the groundwork of his plan, which was to review every department of science and knowledge in terms of this hypothesis; but in the fragments he has left us on art, language, and poetry, the metaphysical basis of his philosophy is carefully illustrated and discussed. The humour, the disarming simplicity and poetry of his writing cannot be commented upon by one who has not read his books in the original German, but it is sufficient to say that enough of Groddeck's personality comes through in translation to make the adventure of reading him well worth while, both for the doctor and for the contemporary artist—for the knowledge and practice of the one supplements the ardours and defeats of the other; and art and science are linked more closely than ever today by the very terms of the basic metaphysical dilemma which they both face. All paths end in metaphysics.

Groddeck was often approached for permission to set up a Society in England bearing his name, on the lines of the Freudian and Adlerian Societies; but he always laughed away the suggestion with the words: 'Pupils always want their teacher to stay put.' He was determined that his work should not settle and solidify into a barren canon of law: that his writings should not become molehills for industrious systematizers, who might pay only lip-service to his theories, respecting the letter of his work at the expense of the spirit. In a way this has been a pity, for it has led to an undeserved neglect—not to mention the downright dishonour of being produced here in a dust-jacket bearing the fatal words: 'Issued in sealed glazine wrapper to medical and psychological students only.' And this for *The Book of the It*, which should be on every bookshelf!

There has been no space in this study to quote the many clinical case-histories with which Groddeck illustrates his thesis as he goes along; I have been forced to extract, as it were, the hard capsules of theory, and offer them up without their riders and illustrations. But it is sufficient to say that no analyst can afford to disregard Groddeck's views about such matters as resistance and transference any more than they can afford to disregard him on questions like the duration of analysis, the relation of analysis to organic disorders, and the uses of massage. If he wholeheartedly accepted

many of Freud's views there were many reservations, many amendments which he did not hesitate to express. For if Freud's is a philosophy of knowledge, Groddeck's is one of acceptance through understanding.

Another fundamental difference deserves to be underlined—a difference which illustrates the temperamental divergence between Freud and Groddeck as clearly as it does the divergence between the two attitudes to medicine which have persisted, often in opposition, from the time of Hippocrates until today. While Groddeck is campaigning wholeheartedly for the philosophy of non-attachment, he refuses to relinquish his heritage as a European in favour of what he considers an Asiatic philosophy. In his view the European is too heavily influenced by the Christian myth to be capable of really comprehending any other; so it is that his interpretation of the religious attitude to life refers us back to Christ, and if he accepts the Oedipus proposition of Freud, he does not hesitate to say that it seems to him a partial explanation. But Groddeck's Christ differs radically from the attenuated portraits which have been so much in favour with the dreary puritan theologians of our age and time. 'Christ was not neither will He be; He is. He is not real. He is true. It is not within my power to put all this into words; indeed I believe it is impossible for anyone to express truth of this sort in words, for it is imagery, symbol, and the symbol cannot be spoken. It lives and *we are lived by it*. One can only use words that are indeterminate and vague—that is why the term *It*, completely neutral, was so quickly caught up—for any definite description destroys the symbol.' And man, by the terms of Groddeck's psychology lives by the perpetual symbolization of his *It*, through art, music, disease, language. The process of his growth—his gradual freeing of himself from disease, which is malorientation towards his true nature, can only come about by a prolonged and patient self-study; but the study not of the ego in him so much as of the *Primordial Mover*, the *It* which manifests itself through a multiplicity of idiosyncrasies, preferences, attitudes and occupations. It is this thorough-going philosophic surrender of Groddeck's to the *It* which makes his philosophy relevant both to patient, to artist, and to the ordinary man. Thus the symbol of the mother on which he lays such stress in his marvellous essay on childhood fuses into the symbol of the crucifixion, which expresses in artistic terms, the

profound and tragic preoccupation. 'The cross, too, is a symbol of unimaginable antiquity . . . and if you ask anyone to tell you what the Christian cross may seem to him to resemble, he will most invariably answer: "*A figure with outstretched arms.*" Ask why the arms are outstretched and he will say they are ready to embrace. But the cross has no power to embrace, since it is made of wood, nor yet the man who hangs upon it, for he is kept rigid by the nails; moreover he has his back turned to the cross . . . What may that cross be to which man is nailed, upon which he must die in order to redeem the world? The Romans use the terms *os sacrum* for the bone which is over the spot where the birth-pangs start, and in German it is named the cross-bone, Kreuzbein. The mother-cross longs to embrace, but cannot, for the arms are inflexible, yet the longing is there and never ceases . . . Christ hangs upon the cross, the Son of Man, the man as Son. The yearning arms which yet may not embrace are to me the mother's arms. Mother and Son are nailed together, but can never draw near to each other. For the mother there is no way of escape from her longing than to become dead wood . . . but the Son, whose words "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" gave utterance to the deepest mystery of our human world, dies of his own Will and in full consciousness upon that cross . . .'

It is in his writings on the nature of art and myths that we can see, most clearly revealed, the kernel of his thought concerning the nature of symbolism and the relation of man to the ideological web he has built about himself; it is here too that one will see how clearly and brilliantly Groddeck interpreted the role of art in society. He is the only psycho-analyst for whom the artist is not an interesting cripple but someone who has, by the surrender of his ego to the flux of the It, become the agent and translator of the extra-causal forces which rule us. That he fully appreciated the terrible ambivalent forces to which the artist is so often a prey is clear; but he also sees that the artist's dilemma is also that of everyman, and that this dilemma is being perpetually restated in art, just as it is being restated in terms of disease or language. We live (perhaps I should paraphrase the verb as Groddeck does) to be lived by a symbolic process, for which our lives provide merely a polished surface on which it may reflect itself. Just as linguistic relations appear as 'effective beliefs' in the dreams of Groddeck's patients, so the linguistic relations of symbolism,

expressed in art, place before the world a perpetual picture of the penalties, the terror and magnificence of living—or of being lived by this extra-causal reality whose identity we cannot guess. 'However learned and critical we may be,' writes Groddeck, 'something within us persists in seeing a window as an eye, a cave as the mother, a staff as the father.' Traced back along the web of affective relations these symbols yield, in art, a calculus of primitive preoccupation, and become part of the language of the It; and the nature of man, seen by the light of them, becomes something more than a barren ego with its dualistic conflicts between black and white. Indeed the story of the Gospels, as reinterpreted in the light of Groddeck's non-attachment, yields a far more fruitful crop of meanings than is possible if we are to judge it by the dualistic terms of the ego, which is to say, of the will. 'Only in the form of Irony can the deepest things of life be uttered, for they lie always outside morality; moreover truth itself is always ambivalent, both sides are true. Whoever wants to understand the Gospel teachings would do well to bear these things in mind.' And Groddeck's Christ, interpreted as an Ironist, is perhaps the Christ we are striving to reinterpret to ourselves today. There is no room here for the long-visaged, long-suffering historical Christ of the contemporary interpretation, but a Christ capable of symbolizing and fulfilling his artistic role, his artistic sacrifice, against the backcloth of a history which, while it can never be fully understood, yet carries for us a deliberate and inexorable meaning disguised in its symbolism.

If we have insisted, in the course of this essay, on the presentation of Groddeck as a philosopher it is because what he has to say has something more than a medical application. In medicine he might be considered simply another heretical Vitalist, for whom the whole is something more than the sum of its parts: certainly he has often been dismissed as a doctor 'who applied psycho-analysis to organic disease with remarkable results'. While one cannot deny his contributions to psycho-analysis, it would not be fair to limit his researches to this particular domain, although the whole of his working life was spent in the clinic, and although he himself threw off his writings without much concern for their fate. Yet it would also be unjust to represent him as a philosopher with a foot-rule by which he measured every human activity. The common factor in all his work is the attitude and the It-precept

which was sufficiently large as to include all manifestations of human life; it does not delimit, or demarcate, or rigidify the subjects upon which it gazes. In other words he refused the temptations of an artificial morality in his dealings with life, and preferred to accord it full rights as an Unknown from which it might be possible for the individual to extract an equation for ordinary living; in so doing he has a message not only for doctors but for artists as well, for the sick no less than for the sound. And one can interpret him best by accepting his It-concept (under the terms of the true-false ambivalence on which he insisted so much) both as truth and as poetic figment. And since Groddeck preferred to consider himself a European and a Christian it would be equally unjust to harp on the eastern religious systems from which the It may seem to derive, or to which it may seem related. ('The power of the eye to see depends entirely on the power of vision inherent in that Light which sees through the eye but which the eye does not see; which hears through the ear, but which the ear does not hear; which thinks through the mind but which the mind does not think. It is the unseen Seer, the unheard Hearer, the unthought Thinker. Other than It there is no seer, hearer, thinker.' *Shri Khrishna Prem.*)

Groddeck would have smiled and agreed, for the principle of non-attachment is certainly the kernel of his philosophy; but the temper of his mind is far more Greek than Indian. And his method of exposition combines hard sane clinical fact with theory in exactly balanced quantities. One has the feeling in reading him that however fantastic a proposition may seem it has come out of the workshop and not out of an ideological boothouse.

Four books bearing his name have been published in England. Of these the only one which pretends to completeness is *The Book of the It*;¹ the three other titles are composed of essays and various papers, strung together by his translator. They are *The World of Man*, *The Unknown Self* and *Exploring the Unconscious*. At the time of writing they are all unfortunately out of print. The first and third volumes contain a thorough exposition of his views on the nature of health and disease; *The World of Man* contains the unfinished groundwork of his projected study on the nature of

¹The English version of *The Book of the It* has been cut: it is not the full text of the German edition.

pictorial art. The last volume also contains some general art-criticism, but is chiefly remarkable for an essay entitled *Unconscious Factors in Organic Process* which sets out his views on massage, and contains a sort of new anatomy of the body in terms of psychological processes. Despite the fearfully muddled arrangement of these papers, not to mention a translation which confessedly misses half the poetry and style of the original, these books should all be read if we are to get any kind of full picture of Groddeck's mind at work.

Even Groddeck's greatest opponents in Germany could not but admit to his genius, and to the wealth of brilliant medical observations contained in his books; it is to be sincerely hoped that he will soon occupy his true place in England as a thinker of importance and a doctor with something important to say. It is fourteen years since Groddeck's death and his complete work is still not available to the general public in England. Why?

For the purposes of this brief essay, however, I have stuck as far as possible to the philosophy behind his practice, and have not entered into a detailed exposition of his medical beliefs and their clinical application; with a writer as lucid and brilliant as Groddeck one is always in danger of muddying the clear waters of his exposition with top-heavy glozes and turbid commentaries. In his work theory and fact are so skilfully woven up that one is always in danger of damaging the tissue of his thoughts in attempting to take it to pieces. I am content if I have managed to capture the ego-It polarity of his philosophy, and his conception of man as an organic whole. But as with everything in Groddeck one feels that manner and matter are so well-married in him that any attempt to explain him in different words must read as clumsily as a schoolboy's paraphrase of Hamlet. This fear must excuse my ending here with a final quotation.

'Every observation is necessarily one-sided, every opinion a falsification. The act of observing disintegrates a whole into different fields of observation, whilst in order to arrive at an opinion one must first dissect a whole and then disregard certain of its parts . . . At the present time we are trying to recover the earlier conception of a unit, the body-mind, and make it the foundation of our theory and action. My own opinion is that this assumption is one we all naturally make and never entirely abandon, and, further more, that by our heritage of thought, we

Europeans are all led to trace a relationship between the *individuum* and the cosmos . . . We understand man better when we see the whole in each of his parts, and we get nearer to a conception of the universe when we look upon him as part of the whole.'

TOM HOPKINSON

ENCOUNTER AT DUSK

THE painter Akenside was a curious phenomenon. In the age in which we live he had somehow managed to make his living by painting. Now nearly sixty, he had never yet illustrated a book, made a drawing for advertisement, taught in an art school, or designed a scarf to be sold by a fashionable dress-shop. He simply painted pictures, for people to hang on their walls or to be bought by art galleries. Though he had never owned many things which were regarded as necessities, he had seldom been actually penniless, and after a lifetime of hard work he now possessed in the bank the sum of three to four hundred pounds.

At least twice a year it was Akenside's custom to close his studio in Fulham and go off for a long spell in the country to refresh his mind. Anyone meeting him on one of these trips would have had little difficulty in guessing what he was. Not that his clothes gave him away—they might in fact have belonged to anyone, consisting usually of a pair of corduroy trousers and varying sweaters according to the coldness of the day. Nor was it just the box he carried under his arm and the knapsack on his back. There was something in his manner which made it clear that he did what he pleased and had always done so, that he had not got to be back anywhere by two o'clock, or even on Monday week. If he went into a bar, he stayed as long as the talk was interesting. If he reached a place he fancied, he settled down as if it was to be his home for life. His attitude towards human beings was the same: he had no hesitation in striking up an immediate friendship, for he felt himself held by no previous ties. Towards women his attitude was perfectly natural and direct. Whenever he was likely to remain for a long time in any place, he tried to find himself a friendly charming girl, and was not upset if he

were unsuccessful. When particularly occupied by work he was capable of living a celibate life for months on end. Though he pleased himself in the pursuit of women and, since he was young, had allowed no one to become of serious importance in his life, he always spoke of women, as he thought, with affection and respect. He detested dirty jokes; resented sly digs at women in general; and when people talked of them as possessing a lower intelligence than men, or being incapable of first-class work, he would interject his opinion with some force.

Not a great one for argument, he was by no means quick at catching up weapons to defend his own point of view, or to attack somebody else's. It was the nature of his mind to arrive at simple results by roundabout means, to assert the commonplace after a full investigation of more entertaining viewpoints. Aware that his thoughts were not specially original, he was little given to airing them, but when he was forced to pronounce, what he said—uttered loudly and a little ponderously—had often the effect of making everything else seem silly, as though the rest had been playing some kind of verbal game while he had been rooting for the truth.

On meeting, the main impression Akenside made was of good health. He was strongly built and ruddy-faced. Vitality bristled in his clipped grey hair. His rather square hands would split an apple as easily as his teeth would crack a nut. His skin shone as if it had been newly soaped. A look both shrewd and speculative lurked in his light blue eyes, and he had an air of concentrated intelligence, such as one sometimes sees in farmers who have applied the whole of a wide understanding persistently to a narrow field.

★ ★ ★

It happened one autumn that Akenside was making his last expedition of the year. He was walking in the Welsh mountains when he overtook two girls on the road. He guessed at once that they were schoolteachers and fell into step beside them. One, he learned, had unexpectedly to go back home, taking the train from the next town. It seemed perfectly natural to Akenside to go to the station with them, see her off, and continue walking with the other. He exerted himself to entertain her, and when after an hour or two of chatting he suggested that they should continue together the next day, she readily agreed.

They passed that day in mutual discovery, or rather in confirming what each had already recognized:

'Of course I knew you were a painter, but I didn't know you were *you*. What are you doing here? Looking for landscapes?'

'Yes,' lied Akenside, whose work was as little dependent on any particular countryside as if he designed statuettes or ballet-settings. 'I thought you might help me to find some likely spots. A fresh eye means so much.' He cocked one of his own at her; she appeared to be taking it all in.

'You're welcome to my fresh eyes for what they're worth,' she said.

The next evening they stayed up talking in the inn where they had stopped. The bars were long since closed. The landlord and his wife had gone to bed. Akenside, who found the girl delightful and attractive, made a direct approach to her. She did not refuse; on the contrary she seemed to be expecting him. He was therefore surprised, and a good deal disturbed, to discover that this was apparently the first time such a thing had happened in her life. 'My God,' he said, caressing her smooth cheek, 'you are a little fool. Why the hell didn't you tell me? The last thing I wanted was to upset you. I'm fond of you, if you want to know . . . I haven't met anyone I liked so much since I can remember.'

'That's my case too,' the girl told him. 'That's why I didn't tell you.'

'I don't follow that.'

'If I had told you, you might not have made love to me . . . After all, if I'd told you I knew you never painted landscapes, you couldn't have taken me to look for likely settings.'

All night Akenside sat up in his room by candle-light, turning over in his mind the question of this girl. How was he to understand what had happened? Was it possible to imagine that she cared for him? She was not yet twenty: how could he at his age be suitable, or even possible, object for her love? It was absurd. Yet how else could he explain that such a modest and charming girl should have accepted him at all? Clearly she must love him—or at least have begun to feel something like love. It would be unjust to her to suppose anything else. But what could she possibly see in him that could overcome her scruples? Yet, if she hadn't found something remarkable, she was not in the least the kind of girl to have had an affair with him for fun. So he went round,

not quite in a circle, rather after his own way in a kind of spiral.

As the hours went by, it seemed to Akenside that at last he reached some sort of answer, something that would at least make sense out of what had taken place. A woman brings to love only what she, at any moment, is. A man may be the object of love not only for what he is today, but for everything he has made of life: himself at this moment, his experience of the world, his success if he has had any, his mind if it exists. This girl had known of him and admired his work. Because of what he had done, because of everything which as a whole he was, he appeared to her as a being worthy of her love. Because her responses were direct and simple, she had given it. It might be surprising, but it was not impossible. If many girls were happy to love an ageing Wellington or Goethe, perhaps one might be willing to love Akenside.

Before morning came, he felt that he had the position clear. He didn't know if he had it right, but he had it clear. He put it to her over breakfast.

'How d'you feel?'

'Happy. Why?'

'If I put a plan before you, will you hold yourself free to turn it down? It's an important plan, so don't consider anybody's feelings. Don't feel tied by anything that's happened. Just look at it, and give an answer.'

'All right: I'll be as blunt as you are.'

'I was thinking you might come and live with me in London. That'll only not seem silly if you love me. If it is silly, just say so.'

The girl didn't answer for a moment. 'Well?' he asked, a little impatiently.

'You haven't said whether you want me to come or not.'

'I shouldn't ask you if I didn't.' He paused. 'Oh, damn it, yes. I want you badly. I never wanted anyone else to be about the place before. Will you come?'

'Yes, of course,' she said. 'And if you hadn't asked me, I should have asked you if I could. I was thinking about it all night long.'

'That's settled then. Have you any things you want to collect?'

The girl laughed. 'Yes: it'll take me two months to get ready. I'll see you in November. You'd better give me the address.'

* * *

During the next two months Akenside asked himself a hundred

times over whether he had been a fool. Increasingly as time went by the answer he gave himself was that he most likely had, but that if so it didn't matter. He could get himself out of this as easily as he'd got himself in. It was no more difficult to ask her to go than it had been to ask her to stay. There was indeed *one* matter in which he resolved to be absolutely firm. However matters might go between them, never, never at any time, must he ask her to marry him. However much he might feel impelled, however eagerly—in the unlikely event—she might desire it, he would not give way. Twenty years' difference he might have taken in his stride and thirty he would perhaps have risked—but forty was a bit too much.

As Akenside turned over in his mind all that he knew of the girl and of himself, there was really only one circumstance that made him uneasy, and to which his mind continually came back. That was her suggestion of a two-months' interval. He had said nothing at the time, because it was not his way to ask unnecessary questions or to try and interfere with other people's plans. But it did not seem an exactly lover-like delay. He presumed at last that she wanted the time to finish some course on which she was working, perhaps to take a diploma or degree of some kind—his knowledge of these things was rather vague—and, if so, what could be more sensible? Because it had rankled in his mind, he put this to her as soon as they met again, their first evening in his studio.

'Oh, no. I gave all that up as soon as I met you.'

'Was it your family then?' Akenside asked, hazily aware that other people's lives were not conducted with the same freedom as his own. 'Was that the trouble? Did you have to do a lot of arguing? Now I come to think of it, what *did* you tell your parents?'

'I have only an aunt,' the girl told him. 'She usually falls in with my plans in the end. I don't, of course, always tell her them in detail.'

'Then what *did* you need the time for?' he demanded, curiosity breaking out.

She blushed. 'I've been learning house-keeping,' she said. 'I wanted to manage things properly for you.'

Later, as he helped her to unpack, he found she had bought a second-hand typewriter so that she could write letters for him; rather to his disappointment she had also cut her hair—which was

long and reddish-gold—into a short bob with a fringe in front, through which she seemed to peer as from a window. Akenside had particularly liked her hair as it was, loose and flowing about her shoulders, but he took care to make no comment. He felt sure she had done this too on his account, probably thinking it made her look more like a model. Perhaps for the same reason she wore flat-heeled shoes and skirts like kilts, with shirts or blouses tucked inside them.

With the arrival of the girl, whose name was Bella, there began for Akenside the most delightful period of his life. His work went as before, but all the bother and worry seemed to have been removed. Bella handled all business matters for him, with much greater firmness than he could have shown himself: she looked after his money, which appeared slowly to accumulate, though there were now two of them living on it instead of one. She did the shopping, kept the studio tidy, prepared meals for him and never showed the least concern if he preferred to work instead of eating them. She would curl up on the sofa with a plate of her own lunch and seem equally pleased if he joined her or went on with whatever he was doing. In addition she was an extremely gentle and interesting companion. He never ceased to wonder either at the things she knew, or the things she didn't. She had been well educated, and understood far more about what was going on in the world than he did. A newspaper, for instance—which from the manner of his life meant almost nothing to him, full of names he had never heard, recounting the progress of events whose beginnings had entirely escaped him—was for her crammed with interest, leading off over the world in all directions.

'Go on,' he would say, pointing with his fork at some heading. 'What does all that stuff mean? Tell me about that!'

On the other hand she had never travelled, and was delighted to hear him talk of what seemed to her curious and interesting journeys. 'What? Were you really in Turkestan? Whatever is it like?'

She had passed all her life, too, in the same social layer, moving neither up nor down, and when she first arrived the bar of a dockside pub was as mysterious to her as the private apartments of a palace. He was astonished to find that among his own friends, familiars of the past thirty years, were some who seemed to her distinguished, almost great men, only a stage or two lower than

figures in the history-books she had been reading of so early.

To please her, Akenside made a point of bringing several to the studio, and he noted with a secret warmth that not only did she understand by nature how to treat them, but that she took particular pleasure in his power to produce such creatures for her. It was clear that she wanted, indeed, to meet them, but wanted much more to have them coming to see him.

She had let her hair grow again now. It hung round her shoulders as she worked or moved about the studio. He never tired of watching her. Sometimes sitting close to her under the twilight in the evening he would gaze for minutes at a time at the bold colouring of her cheek, or run his finger round her astonishingly clear-cut features—clear-cut not just from the front or from one side, but vigorous and distinct from every angle. Her magnificent young body might have been carved out of wood: she woke up in the morning as fresh and strong as a young tree, and she seemed to go to sleep because it had become bedtime rather than because she felt tired. In love she seemed to him happy and responsive; even, he might almost have said, grateful. After six months Akenside gave the girl a ring. It was not a wedding-ring nor an engagement ring, just a gold band with some kind of red stone in it, which she wore on her wedding finger. She looked so delighted when he gave it her, above all when he told her she was the first woman he had ever given a ring in his life, that he took her in his arms and kissed her. Her surprised look made him suddenly aware—as he was always liable to be made aware—of what was odd in their relationship. Most girls of twenty living with a lover would hardly be taken back by an embrace.

Only one thing in their life did Akenside find wearisome. He was so conscious of the difference in their ages that he felt in a way responsible for her happiness. He was always just slightly on watch; watching her to see that she was not imposed on by herself, and was treated as she should be by everybody else; catching himself to see that he did not bore or irritate her. He noticed at once that any direct reference to his age must be alluded. To amuse her with stories of long past events was one thing; but she could not endure anything like facetious comments, or sort of remark that's expected to call out denials—'Oh, but

you're quite young really.' That favourite by-play of the elderly from the first he carefully avoided.

At least two or three times a year they packed up, closed the studio and went off to the country. It was an old habit, and Bella took to it with pleasure. 'All your pictures look as if they had been painted in the Sudan,' she said. 'I can't think why you want to go to Ireland.' They went to Ireland, however, and again to Wales, to Cornwall and the Lake District. Once for two months they went to Spain. It was her first trip abroad. For him it meant a good deal of arranging and considerable expense. Easily, as they set off, she made it worth his while. 'If I didn't go to Spain with you I'd never want to go there with anyone.'

It was on their journeys that they met most inconvenience from the fact that they were not married. For himself he brushed all difficulties of that kind aside, but he was acutely and sometimes ferociously on guard to protect her, and this meant that his travels were no longer quite the old casual drifting. Besides, he wanted her to see things, and would move on from one place where he could happily have spent a week, in order to show her a cathedral or a waterfall, or to visit somewhere mentioned in the book she was continually reading.



Some four or five years passed contentedly away. Akenside was working well, and he was also reaping in success the result of forty years' persistent effort to develop a real talent. When he held shows of his own, every picture sold. He was constantly being pressed to send to exhibitions, and when he did his painting would always be among the few singled out for mention.

'Another notice,' Bella would say, passing the paper over to him.

'It doesn't mean anything', he always answered. 'Mine just happens to be one of the few names they've heard of.' Meantime his three hundred pounds had reached the mythical figure of a thousand.

One summer evening, as he was sitting smoking and she was working by the window, a letter fell through the box into the passage. Neither of them troubled to fetch it. At last after some minutes, as though its presence had been weighing on her mind, Bella got up. It was for him, and contained an introduction from

former Art School colleague who had gone to Canada, combining with any talent he possessed by becoming first an art-teacher, and then a successful headmaster. The introduction was for his son, Martin, who had completed his studies as an architect and, at the age of twenty-six, was taking a job with a big firm in London before going back to make his home in Canada.

'What shall you do about him?' Bella asked.

'Ask him in to supper next week.'

But very much to Akenside's surprise, Bella said that she did not think this at all necessary. 'You haven't seen the father for more than thirty years. He can't expect you to be at his service after all that time. And the son's quite old enough to find his way about. He'll probably only be embarrassed to be asked out by his father's friends, as if he were a boy at school.'

Akenside said nothing. 'Well?' Bella asked. 'What are you going to do?'

'Ask him in to supper,' he replied.

Though Bella had seemed not at all anxious that the young man should visit them, Akenside noticed that she prepared supper with special care, even sending him out to buy a bottle of Chianti. When he got back, the young man was already there. He was tall. His features were harsh, and his face decidedly ugly; it seemed to be all in horizontal lines, rather low forehead, meeting eyebrows, a nose that was all nostril, and an unusually wide mouth. But his manner was friendly and he had an almost startling air of concentration, as though thinking hard about everything he did or said.

'These pictures now,' he began straightaway as soon as he and Akenside had shaken hands. 'Are they what you've done lately? Are they those you like best? Or are they just the ones that happen to be around?'

Akenside went over the studio with him and discussed the pictures freely. He had no inhibitions about his own work, and the young man's comments were equally direct. He wanted to know how Akenside worked, what started a picture forming in his mind, how he actually began the job of painting, how he knew when a picture had gone wrong, how different paintings were related to each other. They talked until supper was on the table.

One thing the young man said struck Akenside. Bella, who was moving rather nervously about the room, had repeated her

remark—as people who live together will repeat things which are new to strangers but old to one another—that Akenside's work might all have been done in the Sudan, it seemed so hot and glowing. 'It was,' the young man casually remarked. 'It was hatched in the tropics of the mind.'

During the meal Akenside changed the conversation over to their guest. It appeared that his life had been by no means the conventional routine of school and college.

'But people don't *still* go prospecting, do they?' Bella asked.

'They don't go washing for gold with frying-pans,' Martin told her. 'But they still want minerals. In fact they want them more than ever, and before minerals can be got out of the ground, they have to be located.'

'But don't people know by now where everything is?' Bella pressed the point, almost as if wanting to prove him wrong. 'I thought all the deposits of every kind would be mapped and known by now.'

'Well, for many minerals it's known roughly where they lie, but only roughly. And then it's a question of finding the exact spot where it'll pay to work them. That's not necessarily the place where the stuff's richest, it's a question, too, of where you can get labour; how far the place is from a railroad, and so on.'

'And how do *you* get to such places to begin with?'

'The easiest way. Then by canoe or horseback, when you can't get on by train or car. Sometimes by air. Once in the North we went by hydroplane, and once by dog-team. Just whatever's going.'

Akenside was looking for some cigarettes.

'How did you get time for all this?' Bella asked. 'Why, you can't be more than ...'

'Twenty-six.'

'Oh, I wasn't asking that. I just mean that, with college and training and so on, I don't see how you ever fitted it all in.'

'Well, what about yourself? What do you do? I know you cook delicious suppers, but what else? Do you paint too, or what?' The young man seemed unaware of the trap he was setting for himself.

'I don't go out to work, if that's what you mean,' Bella answered. 'I don't work in an office, or a shop, and I can't paint. I look after things here ... You think that's not enough?'

'Oh, forgive me!' The young man seemed genuinely upset

You must think me an impertinent fool. Of course, whatever you choose to do is enough for anyone. I only mean that I'm sure you could do anything you set out to do—two things at once, if you wanted to. Or three.'

Soon after, he rose to go. Akenside walked with him down the path. 'An intelligent fellow, that Martin,' he said when he got back.

'Yes.'

'I like his manner.'

'Good.'

'I think we should ask him in again.'

Bella said nothing. As Akenside sat and smoked, an idea started in the young man came back into his mind. It was an idea that had never occurred to him before. Did he perhaps tie Bella down? Could she really be doing two—or more—things at the same time? Was her life with him too limited? And—a further thought—did he in fact limit herself to be the kind of creature he, Akenside, required? Was there a lot more to Bella than he had ever known? And did she realize this herself, or was she waiting for someone else to find it out and tell her?

A few days later as he came home, part of a telephone conversation floated out through the open window of the studio. 'No,' Bella was saying. 'I'd rather not. I never go out without him. I shouldn't at all enjoy it if I did.' She spoke in a very decided voice: it was clear she was saying words prepared beforehand in her mind. She spoke as if she were trying to scare her caller off for good, to put an end to any possibility of the invitation being repeated. If so, her determination must have weakened somewhat, for she ended, '... Thank you very much all the same for calling me'.

* * *

Now for some days, even for some weeks before the visit of young Martin, Akenside had been aware that there was something not altogether right about himself. He blamed it on the heat. The weather was not particularly hot, but heat and dizziness are usually connected—and after all this was the summer. It was dizziness mainly that he felt, but also something more persistent, something which could be described as reluctance to move. He didn't want to get up in the morning. Once up, he didn't care for the idea of going out. When he did go anywhere, the getting

home loomed up as an undertaking to be put off as long as possible. If he were forced to make even a small journey round the corner for tobacco, he found himself working out routes to avoid a crossing, considering whether the streets would be less crowded now or later. He had a horror of falling down and not being able to get up. A year ago he would have tackled a mountainside, now he found reasons for not climbing to the top storeys of buses. Once or twice in his studio he found himself sitting in front of a canvas, not sure how long he had been there, or what he was supposed to have been doing.

Akenside said not a word of all this to Bella. However, there are some secrets not easily kept from those who share one's life, and one day he happened to have stopped to rest on the small path leading to their studio. He was simply standing there, gathering his forces to go up the three steps leading to their door. He had trained himself always to go up without the handrail so that Bella would not notice anything when they came home together. As Akenside stood there, with a basket of things he had been fetching on the path beside him, Bella happened to look out of the window. In a second she was out and had her arm through his. 'Come in,' she said. 'It's a bit hot. You've been working too hard. Come in and sit down. I'll get you a drink.'

She got him a stiff drink and he felt better, sitting there on his old studio sofa with his feet up. He felt better, but he still felt shaky, and if he had been forced under torture to speak truth, he would have said that he felt cold. It was a warm afternoon. He was tired with exertion, but he was cold. Bella gave him a short look: 'You have to see a doctor,' she said gently. 'Haven't you got an old friend who's known you a long time? You don't want to go to some fool who'll tell you not to drink or smoke, or to give up work or travelling about. Go to somebody who knows the sort of life we live, and if he wants any advice, he can send you on to a specialist he knows is good, with a letter to make sure you're treated properly.'

Her angry defensiveness, her use of the words 'we live', the feeling that she had been watching for a long time and saying nothing, only to speak out now when she felt he needed it, touched him to the heart. He put his hand on hers. 'I love you Bella,' he said. 'It was the best thing that ever happened to me, meeting you like that.'

She smiled and stroked his hand, but the words as he said them rang a curious echo in his ear. It sounded as though he were humming up their whole story without meaning to. He felt Bella's hand on his, but she had turned her face away and he hoped that the painful echo had escaped her.

* * *

The doctor Akenside saw proved to be a friendly man and unimposing. He seemed not at all inclined to brush away his experience as imagination. He was apparently in no hurry to interfere with his way of life, and he did not suggest that a few aspirins or a day or two in bed would put matters right. On the contrary, he continued to question Akenside and to note down his answers for a good half-hour. He made tests of his blood-pressure, told him that he must take various pills at stated times, but without suggesting they would have any effect on his condition. Rather, Akenside gathered, they would give pointers to his state when he came back for further tests after a week or two. As to the general seriousness of his symptoms the doctor did not commit himself at all. Only as Akenside rose to go, he said: 'You're not on your own, I hope. It could be a little awkward, you know, if you had one of these attacks of dizziness and you were by yourself . . .'

'No,' Akenside answered. 'There's a girl in my studio who'll take care of me.'

'That's a good thing,' said the doctor. 'I know your work, of course. Seen a lot of it about. Enjoy it very much. Well then, you'll be back in a week's time? Good-bye.'

After a further three or four visits, prolonged over a month or two, the doctor said: 'Well now, I think we can do a bit of humming-up, and I'd like someone who's more of a specialist than I am to do that for me. I've got quite a lot about you typed out here, and I shall send it to the best man for this particular kind of thing and we'll get his opinion. He will want to see you too, of course. The opinion will come back to me, but I'll let you know as soon as I get it, and you can come round and talk things over with me. Or maybe I'll just drop in on you one day at your studio.'

Akenside saw at once what that meant. There might be certain things about his state of health which the doctor would prefer to tell Bella rather than himself. 'No, Doctor,' he said. 'I shall come

and see you here. As a matter of fact, I quite like coming here, you know.'

Surprisingly enough, they both realized that what he said was true, and shook hands no longer casually but as friends. They were friends, but they might very well become opponents; for as Akenside went down the steps a thought came sharp into his mind—that, if the future course of his life were not to be decided for him, he had now a little medical knowledge to acquire.

Some two weeks later, having in the meantime visited the specialist, Akenside sat once more in the doctor's sitting-room. After the usual polite sentences: 'I'm afraid this is going to be rather a long job' the doctor began. The report was on the table, but he made no sign to pass it over. 'We've really got to get down to serious treatment, and I shall probably want you to spend a short time of real quiet. It would be easiest no doubt, in a nursing-home.'

Akenside had learned long since that when doctors say 'probably' they mean 'certainly', and that 'a short time' might be anything up to six months. It was time to come out in the open. 'I'd like to see that report,' he said, 'but I take it in any case that what I've got is arterio-sclerosis, accompanied by much too high blood pressure. It's rather a bad case which has come to you too late. It hasn't responded to any of the things you've tried—in fact it's getting rather worse.' The doctor did not answer. 'Quite soon', went on Akenside, 'you expect some new kind of symptom to appear, possibly of a rather distressing character?' He ended on a question.

'You're conducting this discussion,' said the doctor, 'not me. If it were me, we should be conducting it quite differently.'

'Then you must excuse me if I get the technical terms all wrong, and you mustn't contradict me if the facts are right. My arteries are hardening. They're getting like the hot water-pipes from the cistern, choked-up inside. My blood doesn't circulate properly any more. That's why I feel dizzy and can't get about. The possibilities now are that I may have a stroke of some kind, perhaps more than one: or that because the blood doesn't get through to my brain as it should, the brain may become soft in patches. Forgive me if the words are unscientific, but I may go "queer". If I'm somewhere in a nursing-home, you can try various treatments which will give me some chance of recovery

—or if I get suddenly worse, at least I shan't need to be carried off shouting?'

Once more the doctor side-stepped. 'You finish your piece, my friend. I'll say mine afterwards.'

'Well then,' said Akenside, 'I like you, and as far as medical things go I've more confidence in you than in any one I've ever had to deal with. If it were simply a question of medical advice, I'd take yours straightway.' The doctor bent his head. 'But it's not. It's more important than that. This isn't a matter of health, it's a matter affecting my whole life. There are certain things I have to deal with, and I can't handle them inside.'

'It will have occurred to you', said the doctor quietly, 'that you may very well not be able to handle them if you stay out.'

'That's a chance which I think I have to take.'

'I'm afraid you're making a mistake,' the doctor told him firmly. 'You're counting on some months of activity, which you may not get. And you're leaving out of count the very real chance of your recovery under treatment. Oh, you won't ever be eighteen again, but you might very well enjoy a reasonably old age. Medical science isn't what it was. We've moved on a good deal in these matters in the last few years. Several of my patients . . .'

'I'm sure,' said Akenside, 'and perhaps I'll come back and ask for all that later on. Only I can't come inside just yet. And one thing more I absolutely insist. You must not talk to anyone else about my health. I know, of course, it would only be to do me good—but not a word! No information of any kind, not even if anyone rings you up. I'm not married. No one has a right to know. This is all entirely confidential between you and me. I shall continue coming to see you—if you'll let me. Perhaps later on I can fall in with your suggestion. But meantime, not a word!'

'You needn't stress it,' said the doctor. 'If you ask me to tell anybody about your health, as far as I'm concerned no one will ever know. But from a medical point of view you're acting like a fool.'

'I wish I'd come to see you years ago,' said Akenside.

The doctor put one hand on his shoulder. 'I hope you will go on coming for years yet,' he said. 'Things don't always turn out as the text books say. If you happen to change your mind, just ring me up.'

Akenside could feel the doctor's eyes watching him as he made his way steadily, without the handrail, down the steps.

★ ★ ★

There was the darkness of an autumn evening closing in as Akenside left the doctor's house and turned down Sloane Street to walk home by King's Road. For the first time in his whole existence he found himself looking, not forward into life, but directly over its edge. He had known for some time that this moment was coming, but the knowledge served little to protect him now the moment had arrived. He had suddenly become alone. Once at a horse-race he had seen a jockey fall from his horse on to a spiked railing and be carried off the race-course on a stretcher. One minute the man was part of everything, the sunshine, the laughing and excited crowd: the next he was savagely confined within his frame, as in a box, cut off from the world and the people in it, to fight a desperate battle on his own. In the same way Akenside now felt himself suddenly confined inside his own sick body. It was the only world now left him, and it was a world no one could share.

Frantic ideas drifted stormily across his mind. He would go abroad. In some utterly different country, leading quite another life, the constitution of his body would be changed. The sun was the source of healing; he would sit under the palm-trees and recover. Or take the Polar snows! Let him go on an expedition to the farthest North or South; let him be taken as official artist, and spend long months exposed to the severest weather. That would teach his arteries to harden . . . Or to do both, and submit himself to violent extremes. When an ankle's sprained, don't you expose it alternately to hot and cold water to reduce the swelling? But then, why go at all? He was an artist, not a mariner. In a few years' time, if he were ever heard of, it could be only for his work—so let him paint. Let him work in these next months as he had never worked before: let him show them—Bella, Martin, the doctor, everyone—what he could do. Let him apply everything he'd learned in all these years, now nearly half-a-century of painting, to produce a string—say only twelve or six or four unequalled paintings. And, supposing madness came, use that!

As such fancies, utterly beside the point as he knew well, succeeded one another in his mind, Akenside ceased to walk. To be out of the way of the few passers-by, he stepped without

cranking into the doorway of a shop, and stood there for some minutes, blankly gazing, as he had stood in front of the canvas in his studio. Only this time it was not a canvas he was looking at. It was a card, a white hanging card with printed lettering, a stationer's announcement which his eyes laboriously were taking in. There were only two words on the card: 'DIE STAMPING'.

When the mind works loose, a good kick on the head will sometimes send it back into its place, as schoolboys keep their watches going by hammering them on desks if they should stop. Jackside ran his hand over his stubbly pate and applied himself seriously to his problem—a perfectly simple problem which could be stated in the clearest terms. He had to save his relationship with Bella, not of course for the future, the relationship they had enjoyed already in the past. He had taken a gamble five years back, in bringing this girl so much younger than himself into his life. He had taken it with both eyes open. Up to the present he had won: they had been happy. Whatever she had looked for in coming to him, she had had. It might not have been everybody's kind of life, but it had been hers. She would never regret the time she had spent with him, and he was quite sure she would never deny it. Throughout her life—however now it might develop and expand—those years would remain a precious time to her. And what he had now to do was to protect this time they had enjoyed from lapsing into ugly ruin. His whole courage and manhood revolted against the thought of Bella as his nurse. He did not mean to be remembered by his girl as bed-ridden or idiot.

That was his problem, what was his strategy? It would be impossible to conceal from Bella the fact that he was sick. She knew it now, in any case. But he might fairly hope to hide the fact that things were serious and getting worse. That he should keep his secret was his first concern: while it was his, the direction of events was in his hands. Once Bella knew, she would insist at any cost on looking after him—and it would be her right. Once Bella knew everything, it would be she who would decide what happened and not him. His only hope was to carry through all deception: what chance had he of doing it?

On his side there was first the very thing that had posed the problem, the extreme difference in their ages. Because of this difference, though their lives were passed together, their minds moved continually on different levels. The cast of his thoughts

was always backwards. He worked out of experience, hoarded and understood; he judged events and people in comparison with others known before; ideas such as 'pleasure', 'love', 'adventure', 'travel', called up, not things which were one day going to happen, but impressions from an accumulated past. For her, the opposite was true: her life was forward and in front. If she sat idly dreaming, it was not of what had happened to her but of what might and would. Very seldom had Akenside the least idea, as he sat watching her, of where her thoughts had wandered; and she, he was sure, had quite as little knowledge of his own. How indeed could she have, seeing that most of the events that filled his fancy had taken place before ever she was born. This natural division in their minds would render far easier the keeping of a secret in his own.

But something more was needed. She had got used, he thought, to his being about the studio more than before, and to his sitting still a good deal, by himself. In the coming weeks, however, he was likely to sit a good deal stiller yet. Some pretext, some new explanation, would be needed to account for his being so much alone without his having any work to show for it. And that excuse now came to Akenside in the light of a masterly proposal. He would, he knew perfectly well, be able to paint no more; and he rejected with disgust the idea of pretence-painting. His cover should be a quite different one, that he was writing. He would write his memories, and couple with them a statement of his artistic principles. He would sum up his life's work and the recollections of his life in one. He would describe his schooling and his early travels, would show the sources, honour the masters he particularly cherished. He would criticize the trends he had not followed, and justify the ones he had. He would make some illuminating comments on his better-known contemporaries . . . or rather he would pretend to do all these things, and if ever anything got down on paper, Bella should type it out.

So much for his method, but much more important than the method was his aim. That aim was even simpler: to detach Bella from himself. He, Akenside, was to effect the quietest possible transition from her present to her past. He could not send her away, she would not go. But at any time after the next few weeks it might become impossible for him to continue normal life: it would then be essential to act quickly. He would need to effect

the transition in fact he now wanted her to make in feeling. What he must do, between now and then, was to assure her of a natural protector when the moment came. There was not much doubt in his own mind about the attraction between Bella and young Martin. While he was about, she would resist it—but it was not necessary to his plan that they should reach a declaration. It was enough that they should be entangled. Already they were strongly attracted; before long he might fairly expect them to be in love. Once he was sure of that, the battle was won. He could retire from the field in his own time and manner.

Though Akenside intended to leave her everything he had, he need have little fear, on her account, of any scandal. He was well known, but he was not famous. His permission to have heart-failure was down in writing, signed by the leading specialist of the day, and if he happened to have heart-failure at a spot where the consequences were final, no one could possibly be subject to reproof...

* * *

Akenside walked slowly. He had needed some hours to get home, and when he opened the door, his studio was in darkness. Instantly he switched the light. By the door was an old pair of slippers, put there by himself so that he would not disturb Bella when she came in late. He put them on. She was asleep. He stood for some moments looking down at her. Her lips were slightly parted. She lay with her red-gold hair spread out over the pillow. It was spread out in curiously formal waves like the hair of a naiad on a silver coin. One arm was flung out across the sofa in one of those dramatic gestures children so often fall into when sleeping. His ring, which she always wore, was not round her finger; it lay on the little table by her side.

Akenside's own bed was no longer in this room. Some months ago, when he first felt illness coming on, he had cleaned out for himself a little box-room, a sort of cupboard opening off the gallery which ran along one wall. He was grateful for the foresight which had directed him. That was his bedroom now, and he would be glad to go there. But before going, there was one small job he had to do. He went over to the table and got out a pen:

'My dear Martin,' he wrote, controlling the letters with some effort, 'Bella and I would be so glad if you could come in to supper one day this week. Shall we say Wednesday?'

BERNARD DENVIR

ANDRÉ BAUCHANT

It would be interesting to write a history of the European subconscious, of the images projected by artists of the recurrent dream which lies hidden beneath all the surface achievement and rational exploit. Because this dream was first explicit in Greece we are apt to visualize it purely in terms of classical mythology, verging almost on to classical history; Helen of Troy became Cleopatra, Hector, Alexander, until, as time went on Orpheus and Virgil were interchangeable to the medieval mind. Perhaps what we are apt to formularize as 'our debt to Greece and Rome' is a debt only of etymology. Heloïse and Madame Bovary may be the sisters and not the daughters of Penelope, and Prometheus but one actor in a drama of which 'Huis Clos' is not the final scene.

The artist, no matter what his medium, comes into contact with this great flow of imagery and feeling mainly through the instrumentality of his instinct. The painter is in closest touch with the irrational; more than any other artist he deals in magic, in deception, and the use of myth and of symbols is to him a necessity, not a luxury of his craft. Fifty men may say the same thing in the same way, but to put even a dab of paint on a canvas, a line on a paper, is immediately to surrender oneself to the tyranny of personality.

It was not until the nineteenth century that the older forms of mythological or religious expression became, as far as living art was concerned, irrelevant. The Impressionists were realists, who made visual reality and the documentation of appearances their chief weapon in the onslaught on apprehension. It was their quest for 'reality' which made possible that dominance of intellect in painting which resulted first in Cézanne, and then in Cubism. Every artistic movement of the last half-century has been coloured by its reaction to this rational quest for reality. Preoccupied with the quest for a purity or a logic of expression which eventually developed into a stylization so extreme as to become a kind of algebra, Cubism and its offshoots integrated human feeling and human thought only in so far as the artist was concerned. The lay

spectator, whether cultured or not, was predominantly conscious of an aridity, of a lack of common humanity, giving that phrase all the undertones of lyricism and emotionalism which have come always to be associated with it. The dualism of form and content of poetry and plasticity, of body and soul, had ceased to be internal to every painting, and had become instead an objectivized struggle, a latter-day statement of the rivalry between Poussinistes and Rubensistes.

It is typical, therefore, of the nostalgia humanity always cherishes for those qualities which it does not possess, that it was not until the advent of Cubism that any strong feeling developed about the Sunday, or Primitive painter. When Rémy de Gourmont, Alfred Jarry and Apollinaire began to hail the Douanier Rousseau as a great painter, they were suggesting the nature of the fascination exercised over them by the kind of painting which they were helping to demolish. The strongest support for the Primitives has always come from the *littérateurs*, who, starved of poetry by the artists' quest for a purely plastic perfection, found it again in the meticulous realism of the 'innocent eye'. Although Rousseau, Bombois or Vivin might teach artists a quality to envy, there could never be a faux-Rousseau, a disciple of Bombois or a school of Vivinistes.

The appreciation of the Primitive painter has been occasioned by a phase in the history of painting and a reaction in the more general psychology of our time. Rousseau was the first Primitive to be treated as an individual artist, and, since his time educated European taste has come to savour the personal mythologies of Bombois, of Vivin, of Peyronnet, of Séraphine, of Jean Eve and of Bauchant. It is one of the outstanding features of the work of all these painters that they acquire naturally and inevitably, not only a highly personalized technical approach, but also a recognizable and immensely significant mythology of the kind which their more sophisticated brethren seek, usually in vain. As Bernard Dorival has pointed out (*Les Étapes de la Peinture Moderne*, vol. 3, p. 27), 'Le grand anonymat du savoir tend à confondre ceux qui savent dans une foule anonyme. Chaque technique s'individualise', and because, by their very nature they were free from this anonymity, the Primitives have been able to tap directly the sources of European iconography. Because they are bound to reality by the limitations of their vision, they have

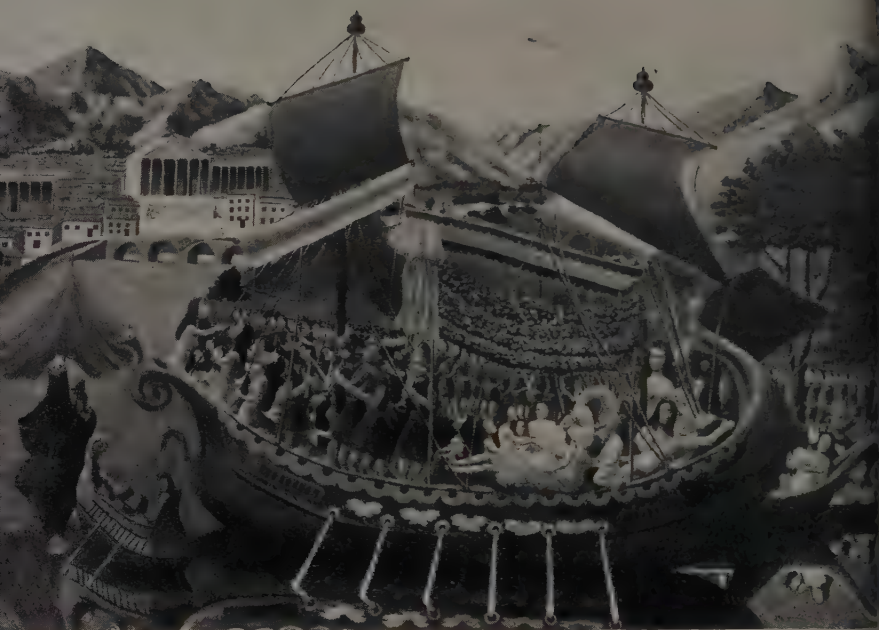
become the most poetic of all painters; because they are limited to detail they have become the most abstract.

Free to paint whatever they liked, and whatever attracted them, their style and subject-matter assumes a greater significance for their own age. Vivin and Utrillo are the only Canalettos of our own urban scenery (the same type of subject appealed also to Greaves and to Lowry), whilst the tropical extravagances of Rousseau, the Barbizon-Fontainebleau idylls of Bombois, and the maritimal preoccupations of Peyronnet have a relevance surpassing the merely documentary. With Bauchant the position is a more interesting one; just as Rousseau has been one of the few modern artists to achieve a means of reconciling portraiture with the artistic responsibilities of his development, so Bauchant has achieved the even more remarkable feat of introducing into modern art 'les grandes machines'. The reminiscence of Poussin is inescapable, and paintings such as his 'Jesus in the Court of the High Priest' recall Poussin's 'David with the head of Goliath', from Dulwich, in form and composition as well as in feeling. Translating literally the dreams of Europe and of Western civilization, with the intellectual equipment of an individualist peasant of the Third Republic, he has found himself in the tradition of Watteau and of Corot. It was Michelet who was first responsible for reaffirming a belief in the cultural significance of ordinary people, and their relevance to the general scheme of things, and Bauchant repaid the debt by constructing his artistic syntax from the writings of the nineteenth-century popularizers of history. It was an attitude not dissimilar to that of Hugo. Both have the unacademic attitude towards the past, looking upon it rather as it were a part of contemporary life, with something of the same feeling which, in the eighteenth century removed the element of incongruity from a bewigged Caesar or a Venus in hooped skirts. The nearest literary equivalent to Bauchant is a passage from Hugo's 'Zim-Zizimi', in which the poet describes the tomb of Cleopatra.

Passants, quelqu'un veut voir Cléopâtre au lit;
Venez, l'alcôve est morne, une brume l'emplit;
Cléopâtre est couchée à jamais; cette femme
Fut l'éblouissement de l'Asie, et la flamme
Que tout le genre humain avait dans son regard;
Quand elle disparut, le monde fut hagard;



ANDRÉ BAUCHANT. Jesus in the Court of the High Priest. 1933



Cleopatra's Barge. 1939



The Fall of Babylon. 1941



The Fifth Day of the Creation. 1942

Ses dents étaient de perle et sa bouche était d'ambre;
 Les rois mouraient d'amour en entrant dans sa chambre. . . .
 O vivants, allez voir sa tombe souveraine;
 Fièrè elle était déesse et daignait être reine;
 L'amour prenait pour arc sa lèvre aux coins moqueurs;
 Sa beauté rendait fous les fronts, les sens, les cœurs,
 Et plus que les lions rugissants était forte;
 Mais bouchez-vous le nez si vous passez la porte.

This is a sort of classical 'Image d'Épinal', and shows Hugo, and André Bauchant, treating the great with a familiarity which eventually is fruitful of more than contempt.

Because the Primitive artist is the product of an environment which is very different from that which is assumed to be the average one of the 'intellectual', it is more necessary to pay attention to the details of his biography than it is with those whom we can easily against the background of nineteenth-century Paris. André Bauchant was born on 24 April 1873, in the village of Châteaurenault, near Tours. His father, a gardener, came from the lower fringe of the *petite bourgeoisie*, and might have risen above the possession of his eventual two hectares, had it not been for an economically inhibiting addiction to the joys of the bottle. André attended the École Communale in the daytime, and in the evening worked with his elder brother, Hippolyte, in the parental fields. By the time he was fourteen his education was finished, and he concentrated on the orientation of his life. During 1894 he spent ten months in the army, but was released because his father had been stricken by rheumatism, that occupational disease of the European peasant. At the almost canonical age of twenty-seven André married Alphonsine Bataillon, a village girl. It was the year of the Universal Exhibition, and they spent their honeymoon in Paris, gaping at the miracles of art and industry, and being particularly struck by the relevance of a Sèvres vase ornamented with an allegorical subject, 'L'Amour se dévolant'. Then followed fourteen years of village life, dominated, physically by the twelfth-century donjon which gave its name to the village, and spiritually by the struggle for economic survival, a struggle set within the framework of the soft Touraine landscape and marked by the passage of the inevitable seasons. Then came the war. Bauchant rejoined his regiment at Tours, but

was preserved by a benevolent providence from any more destructive experience than boredom, the tireless, unending, irrelevant boredom of army life. This indeed was not without value in the formation of his character. Condemned, perhaps even blessed, by fate with a life secure within the defence of that ceaseless activity of the peasant, he had never been faced with the responsibility of adventuring into the world of passivity. An army life is a monastic one, not only in the emotional sense, but in that it confers freedom from the world. Introduced to obligatory inactivity, Bauchant was able to explore his own personality, and that was valuable if only because it revealed to himself the possession of an extraordinary visual memory. The internal revelation was followed by an external one. He volunteered for service in the Dardanelles, and in 1916 spent ten months in Greece. This was the formative period of his life. The French peasant, nurtured in a language which assimilated rather than reproduced the great names of Greece and made them its own, a language which knew Plato as Platon, and counted as one of its greatest lines of verse,

‘C’est Vénus toute entière à sa proie rattachée’,

had come into contact with his own spiritual homeland. He was not yet a painter; he had not yet come to that mode of expression, but, as he sat outside his army tent in the cool of the evening, he could discern the outlines of Troy, and his mind took on the shape and contours which it was always to retain.

Bauchant, though he had left school at the age of fourteen, was a product of that French educational system which was Clemenceau's most enduring monument, and the sole good fruit of the Franco-Prussian war. It was a system which was resonantly ‘laic’, harking back for its inspiration to the rationalists of the enlightenment, but doing so with an unselfcritical vigour peculiar to the *bourgeoisie* from which it emanated. Over against it, part opposing, part implementing, was the religious order and scheme of things, appealing to a different set of instincts, and emphasizing that duality which was to underlie modern French civilization. Bauchant was very much a product of his time and country in feeling this conflict. He was a peasant; he was a Catholic, and, eventually, he was an artist, and all these things are connected with traditionalism, even with retrogression; they are the qualities which made El Greco and Cézanne *bons bourgeois*. On the other hand, his education and subsequent reading, with which, even

Before he joined the army, he beguiled the inactive hours of his life, had inclined him towards that type of enlightenment which in England is typified by the Thinker's Library and the activities of the Rationalist Press. His mind was nurtured on the work of the secondary Michelets, the inferior Taines, on the work of such popularizers of history as Victoire Duruy's *Histoire des Grecs* and Guyau's *Histoire des Empereurs Romains*. His staple imaginative diet came from an older and more distinguished source, from a period when the tradition of the encyclopaedists was beginning to merge with that of the great historians. Constantin François de Chassebœuf was born in 1757 and died in 1820. A member of the enlightened liberal aristocracy, it was typical of him that he should have put the vague, sentimental orientalism of his time into practice, for, leaving France, he spent his early manhood in the East, and became exceptionally well acquainted with Arabic literature. He became a representative of the Tiers État in the États Généraux, and on the advent of Napoleon was offered the position of fellow consul, and then that of Minister of the Interior. He wisely declined both, and devoted the rest of his life to the study of history. His most famous book, and the one which by the curious accident of circumstance became Bauchant's most treasured possession, was *Les Ruines, ou, Méditations sur les Révolutions des Empires*, which was published in 1791. Few titles give a clearer picture of the book and of the age in which it was written. Robert of the Ruins was still translating into paint and canvas the architectural reveries of Piranesi, and the decrepit was still a forceful influence in current aesthetics. The meditative element, however, derived from the Rousseauesque tradition, was already demanding a more rigorous exegesis, and the stately resonance of *Les Révolutions des Empires* implied Hegel and hinted at Marx. The actual appearance of Greece—he had not expected it to be so rocky—gave to Bauchant some embodied image of those imaginative rhapsodies which de Chassebœuf had already kindled in his mind. The divergent elements in his character were somehow fused, and his career as an artist began when he was forty-five. Returning to France, he was quite accidentally made a draughtsman in the signals office. It was like coming home: all the old memories of school returned, the hot afternoons with the pencil and the fruit-like shapes of the continents; he drew vigorously, easily and accurately. But he was not content to leave

it at that; he felt a desire to outstep the rigid confines of schematic drawing, and ornamented his maps with curious decorations of flowers, of little landscapes and of birds'-eye views of the country he was anatomizing. His artistic achievements became well known within the limits of his company, and his fellow-soldiers made a point of always trying to find him paints and canvas. By the time of the Armistice he was a non-commissioned officer.

He returned to Châteaurenault on 8 January 1919. During the course of the war, external circumstances had conspired to vindicate his emancipation from the position of a mere peasant. His wife had become insane, and his holding had become completely ruined. But, though he was offered a job in a Ministry in Paris, he refused it, feeling that the hold exercised over him by his native countryside was too strong to be denied. He rented a house on the banks of the Brenne, and, going to live there with his wife, devoted himself entirely to the task of learning how to paint. Starting off on flower pieces, with an occasional portrait, he graduated to largely conceived landscapes, and eventually to those mythological compositions by which he is today chiefly known.

In 1920 he went up to Paris to see the Salon d'Automne at the Grand Palais, and was so impressed by it that in the following year he sent in sixteen canvases, nine of which were hung. They attracted immediate attention, and informed opinion re-echoed the critic who said 'c'est du Rousseau, amélioré par Marie Laurencin'. Corbusier came to see him, and published an article on him in *L'Esprit Nouveau* which he was then editing. Mme Jean Bucher was an early supporter, and Diaghilev, understandably enough, was impressed by the work of a painter who translated into terms of Western painting something of the Russian Orphic spirit. In 1928 he commissioned Bauchant to do the costumes and scenery for a ballet and took him to Monte Carlo. This was the year of Bauchant's first exhibition, in Paris, one which was subsequently shown at the Lefèvre gallery.

Bauchant was of the generation of the Fauves, but it would be useless to seek in his work any of the characteristics associated with the conscious artistic movements of his time. The formula of 'Rousseau, improved by Laurencin' is too facile to carry conviction. Comparison with Rousseau is inevitable, and, indeed, the nature of Bauchant's genius is only to be understood against the background of the work of his fellow-Primitives, whilst it

night, with some show of justice be said that all women painters are Sunday-painters at heart. The suggestion of Laurencin obviously comes from his light, lyrical colouring, but Dufy would have been an apt, and more stimulating, analogy.

From his fellow-Primitives Bauchant is distinguished by the fact that he is never urban; he has remained a peasant and never migrated to Paris or become involved in an especially 'artistic' community. Though painting occasional portraits and always yielding to that essentially 'primitive' desire to paint flowers and flower-pieces, his most characteristic genre is that to which the tradition of European painting has always attributed pride of place. He is a history painter, and his landscapes are but a province of that more distinguished sphere of artistic activity. The perfection of physical detail which always accompanies the work of the primitive painter is, in his case, reflected in a precision of historical accuracy, derived partly from his reading, partly from a painstaking study of the work of nineteenth-century artists to be found in such luxuriant abundance in most of the provincial art galleries of France. Paintings such as the medieval 'Hunt in the Forest of Châteaurenault', with its curious reminiscences of Paolo Uccello and the later 'Greek Chorus' are almost documentary in their accuracy. Bauchant indeed is, in his powers of historical perspective, the direct antithesis of Hollywood and the effects which it achieves in its costume pictures. He feels the past rather than knows it, and his interpretation of it lacks the glamour of retrojection. His Greek soldiers, his Egyptian maidens and his eighteenth-century generals are free from the aseptic, unconvincing verisimilitude which has distinguished so many extras in the film studios of the world.

Knowing the urban paintings of Vivin, the circus paintings of Bombois, and the general preoccupation of the Primitives with the mystery surrounding the tedium of daily life, one might be tempted to use the work of these proletarian painters as a prop in the defence of an ideology. But the charm of the Primitive lies in his identity with life; he has the courage of his own convictions, and turns to his dream world with an instinctiveness which knows no shame. Escapism is a word which to him has no undercurrent of accusation; Rousseau's real or imagined journey to Mexico, and Bauchant's actual experience of Greece have a certain inevitability about them. We do not know Bauchant's opinion of the

work of those whom taste places in the same category as himself, but we remember Rousseau protesting that he could give Cézanne a few hints on painting, and Bombois' reluctant confession that he did not like the works of the Douanier because they were not 'realistic' enough. The sophisticated artist can be frank about his time and comment on its implications because his intellectual equipment gives him a sense of detachment which, at its worst, is a kind of insulation. What is curious is that of all the Primitives, Bauchant should be the only one to take to religious imagery. His 'Assumption of the Virgin', a flat, flower-bedecked image, posed against an intensely blue sky, is perhaps, the final European statement of that once familiar theme, and his most recent painting is a 'Christ Carrying His Cross'.

Struggling with the problems of expression, as though no one had ever done so before, Bauchant has achieved an act of pure painting, free from any implications save those of so profound a kind as to evade the superficiality of the deliberate. An excellent draughtsman, he elevated his quest for monumentality and magnificence of composition into a permanent part of the revolt against the ephemerality of and looseness of Impressionism. His innate lyricism has become a counterblast against the cold intellectuality of Post-Fauvism. A painter of excellence by any standards, his work emphasizes the fact that the Innocent Eye of the Primitives, of the 'maîtres populaires de la réalité' is not accompanied by an inept hand, and that artistic simplicity is a matter of apprehension, not of execution.

AUGUSTUS JOHN

FRAGMENTS OF AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY—XVII

COCOA is one of the slowest of coolers . . . relinquishing my cup in despair, I rushed out of the kitchen, seized my satchel, and with death in the soul headed for school. I had, perhaps, ten minutes before the bell and over a mile to run through the devious lanes of the lower quarter of the town. At last, bursting into the precincts by way of the playground, I raced across it to arrive

gasping for breath just as the bell 'went' and before the door of the big classroom was closed against me. The Headmaster, though noted champion of liberty, wielded at the same time a heavy ruler . . . Every morning the labours of the day were prefaced by a short homily by this little man, followed by a hymn or sometimes 'Scots, wha hae', and lastly the Doxology. Our Head, as he stood before his assembled charges, presented a distinctive and memorable figure. His large, spectacled face was crowned with a lofty crest of white hair; he wore a white tie, a frock coat and button boots. His trousers always seemed to me a little short and yet were not turned up. A fervent Gladstonian, he was also a pillar of the local Congregational Tabernacle. Greenhill was an exceptional type of school, not exactly a grammar school, being undowered, but it catered for the middle classes in the widest sense and Latin was certainly taught, after a fashion. The Head was assisted by a staff comprising two of his daughters and several under-masters. The latter came and went with surprising frequency and seemed to belong to the pauper section of society, being always hungry, ill-clad and down-at-heel. A third daughter of the house actually took lessons with us, but at a desk apart. In her proximity the boys became more than ever gauche and incompetent, whereas in these surroundings the pretty young girl, while diffusing an atmosphere of unease compounded of love and fear, seemed, herself, only to gain in assurance and facility. During the intervals for recreation, my favourite pastime was swinging on the trapeze which, attained by a ladder, hung from a kind of gibbet in the playground. I also joined with zest in such local games as 'Kingery' and 'Whip-tin'. One day, being discovered out of order during drill, I received a smashing box on the ear from our drill-master, an athletic and most conscientious officer. This blow, without increasing my military efficiency in the least, deafened me for life. On one occasion I took part in a proper stand-up fight such as one reads about in boys' books. My opponent, who was, of course, bigger and older than me, naturally got the worst of it and was led away beaten. Unfortunately, instead of enjoying my victory and the congratulations of my backers, I spoiled the whole show by bursting into tears. My sympathies were apparently with the loser! As for my art education, in addition to the official task of copying lithographs of Swiss scenery, I went further on my own account and practised drawing from the life. I found good

models in the masters. Great caution was necessary, for this form of study was clandestine and punishable. One day while thus occupied I was observed by my favourite subject, the Head, who calling me up before him, examined my effort with a wry smile and then attacked me viciously with his ruler, almost disabling my hand for good. Without knowing it, I may have been putting into practice the dictum of Prosper Mérimée: '*L'Art, c'est l'exagération à propos.*'

The second master, in imitation of his chief, also employed the ebony ruler, which, like a king's sceptre, seemed to be a symbol of authority. It amused him to approach his pupils softly from behind, as they bent over their books, and skilfully tap on their bonier prominencies with this instrument. When it came to my turn to be thus stimulated I reacted as if by clockwork and landed a smart back-hander to the face of the sadist, sending him, pale and shaken, back to his rostrum. This exploit was the climax to a series of delinquencies which had been reported to my father: always methodical he made a list of them and summoning me to his study or office, read it out. Then, after working himself up to a suitable pitch of excitement, he took a cane and with a 'now, sir!' proceeded to apply it in the usual way, though without much conviction. His duty done he sent me to my room where at last I could freely give vent to my mirth. My father's performance had been but indifferent and added nothing to his reputation.

My reading and writing improved immensely at Greenhill, but not my arithmetic. Both my brother and I were so backward in this subject as to require a separate class to ourselves, the lowest of the low! Apparently, the school did not prosper financially. At any rate, Mr. Goward suddenly decided to sell up and depart for the New World with his family.

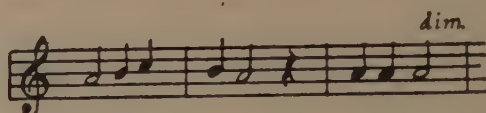
A new school had now to be found, and, on the recommendation of some casual acquaintances, we were sent to one in Clifton. I would not recommend this school myself, but as it no longer exists, it is no matter. There were a good many pupils from South Wales here and even from Ireland, with some very raw specimens among them: in fact, it was a very odd assortment of boys among whom my brother and I found ourselves. We were odd, too. Not even the Sunday top-hats, Eton jackets and collars could weld us into anything like the desired uniformity. The many disparate elements in our population seemed to be all represented

were in a form exaggerated and quite unassimilable. This was no disadvantage from the point of view of a budding draughtsman who, least of all, would be interested in the indefinable even when it should be held to constitute the norm of national character. I was not seeking the norm at this stage, but rather the accidents. To a youth called Keith Williams, in spite of his homely name, displayed marked Hittite (or possible Amorite) contours, I was more interested in these than in the greatest common denominator which he shared with all his comrades. My brother was rather closely allied with this fellow and became known as 'Keith Williams's interpreter'.

I made no deep or lasting friendships at this place, but I will always remember with tenderness my association with one poor boy who, though a half-wit, displayed an affection, honesty and trust which we usually attribute to saints but meet with more commonly in dogs. This school was of the preparatory order: it is difficult to decide to what great end we were being guided and prepared. Neither the Head nor his assistants, I think, would have been inspired to answer this question satisfactorily. No prophetic voice caused our hearts to burn within us: no breath from Heaven (or Hell) came to set aflame our smouldering and very smoky imaginations. Philosophy was eschewed; Art apologized for, and science summarized in a series of smelly parlour tricks. Patriotism was certainly inculcated as the foreign masters learnt to their cost: 'But this is pandemonium,' exclaimed one poor Belgian tutor amidst the uproar of the tribal celebrations for which his class was held to be an excuse. My sympathies, I must say, forbade me to join in these excesses. Sport was also encouraged. I found football excited me, but not cricket. The long hours spent in 'fielding' might, I thought, have been so much better employed. For example, there were the docks of Bristol to be explored, and then the river Avon, flowing westwards under wooded cliffs, seemed to invite one to follow it to the Golden Valley and the sea. In spite of general gloom, boredom, and sometimes anguish, there were moments of wild exhilaration, fun and laughter, and now and then one even found oneself strangely absorbed in one's lessons... I have not forgotten the kind eyes of the Headmaster's handsome wife, nor the generous bosom on which, in great agitation, I once laid my head and wept.

On dark autumn evenings, as we sat at Prep., I would often

hear a melancholy wail coming from far off. It might have been the cry of an itinerant street vendor, but to me it sounded more mysteriously. I hear it now : this is how it went :



On leaving this school I was sent to yet another, only just opened at Tenby. Here everything was new and shiny. The Head was a slightly anglicized Welshman with Scottish proclivities. His wife, however, was definitely home-grown and extremely pretty in a dark way. This school was so small that it was like a family party. We had only one under-master, who, as usual, was a bird of passage, subject to continual replacement. But at last the Head obtained the services of his brother, who was not so easy to get rid of—he had been a policeman . . . Although teaching was hardly his vocation he found the job suited him on the whole and stuck to it. In contrast to his predecessors he soon became famous for the splendour of his appearance. Draped in bold sporting tweeds, with his bundle of golf clubs suspended from his shoulder, and moving with the stately deliberation which his training in the Force had promoted, this tall, blond and muscular Adonis excited general admiration, mixed with some anxiety, for the ladies of the district voted him irresistible.

His story would provide excellent material for a novel in the Flaubertian style with perhaps a touch of Dickens, but as it does not concern me directly I will here leave our Welsh Casanova and return to his brother. This man, with no outward marks of distinction to recommend him, had, no doubt, some charm of manner, which, though illusory, sufficed to arouse the hero-worshipping propensities of a lonely adolescent. Possibly through unconscious transference of the filial instinct, I 'fell' for him, and though at first he responded genially, later on the naïve warmth of my affection which had begun by flattering him now was felt as a menace, bound sooner or later to show up the intellectual weakness and appalling meanness of soul it was his chief business in life to conceal from others and especially himself. His ego, although protected by the mottled gown of authority, was in

anger. I had become an embarrassment. A trifling incident provided him with an opportunity to discredit me and by a drastic sacrifice regain his sense of security. I had absentmindedly overlooked some regulation. The schoolmaster, making a mountain of this molehill, arraigned me before the class. I was accused of deceit: my plea of forgetfulness, though exactly true, fell flat; a long discourse followed on the subject of—veracity! The portentous solemnity of this performance was beyond belief and certainly assumed. Though the charge was contemptible the treachery of a being to whom I had accorded almost divine honours was more than I could bear. The distress I could not dissimulate seemed, no doubt, clear evidence of guilt in the eyes of my comrades—as if I cared for that! However, the operation, though painful, was a complete success: I was cured of my idolatry. Soon afterwards came a fresh parting of the ways: I went to the Slade, but the amateur pedagogue, for some reason or other, cut his throat in a railway train.

* * *

*Ah! que fai bon poujà senso relàmbi
Vers soun désir, emai siegue qu'un sounge!*

*Ah! qu'il fait bon naviguer sans répit
Vers son désir, bien qu'il ne soit qu'un songel!*

FRÉDÉRIC MISTRAL.

St. Rémy de Provence, a town not very remarkable in itself, is placed at the centre of a wonderful district. On first visiting it I was unimpressed. It was not to be compared with Martigues, I decided. Unmissable, above all, the Étang de Berre. There is no clear water to be seen at St. Rémy, but there are canals flowing with a kind of milk and the Rhône and the Durance are not far off: above all, the rocky Alpilles are close by with an endless sequence of exquisite landscapes. As in all French towns, the Place de la République is provided with its regrettable monument to a famous native, in this case, Gounod. A few ambitious villas advertise the pretensions of the local rich, but as these are partly screened behind high walls, the general air of well-seasoned mediocrity remains undisturbed. But the town is not without distinction. Within a mile stands the hospital of St. Paul with its early church and cloisters. Here Van Gogh was interned after his breakdown in Arles, but, let out from time to time when his health permitted, he was able to render his

tormented vision of the countryside in many a glittering canvas. It is said Nostradamus was born, if he did not practise, here. A mutilated château bears the escutcheon of de Sade. The Antiques or Roman monuments nearby attest in their proportions and battered surfaces the authentic lines of classic tradition. The *fouilles* of Glanum have already revealed something of the importance of this Gallo-Roman town. We are at the heart of Provence and on the track of Julius Caesar's bloody legions. The best way to approach Les Baux from here is by taking the road which, twisting and turning, mounts the Alpilles until the city of ruins comes to view across the gulf of the Val d'Enfer amidst strange formations of 'Bauxite' protruding through the sparse soil like gigantic fungi or old bones: some of these outcrops have been quarried in deep rectangular cavities, for this stone beneath its weathered pachyderm can be cut like cheese. Rooted in the great mother-rock of which its shattered towers are but a prolongation, the stronghold, once the seat of an empire stretching to Constantinople, was, for reasons of State, demolished by Richelieu. But the ugly wreckage of former magnificence and power, salvaged by Time, now smiles equivocally under the maquillage of sun and wind. Charmed by the remote and curious site, I at first thought seriously of establishing myself in one of the numerous chambers cut in the rock and still intact, but I had not reckoned with the force of the mistral at this height and still less suspected the aura of madness and violence which is said to linger where once the Courts of Love were held.

One day, entering a little wine-shop in the village, I found myself listening to a stranger who was addressing the company. His voice and manner were impressive, but though he spoke at the top of his voice I was unable to follow his meaning for he used the Provençal tongue: hearing the name of the poet Mistral repeated, I asked the speaker if he knew this famous person, whom I admired and had often seen at Arles where he visited weekly the Musée Arletan, a repository of the traditional crafts and culture of the region. Changing to French, the orator informed me that Mistral was his greatest friend and if I wished he would be delighted to arrange a meeting. We then fixed a date at Maillanne where he would first of all introduce me to his own home and family—a 'typical Provençal ménage,' he said, 'simple but dignified and perhaps a little old-fashioned'—after which he would conduct me to the

poet's residence. At the hour agreed I arrived with my sketchbook, or I hoped to make a drawing of the master. My new friend's house and family proved disappointing. His wife and children were unattractive and their surroundings squalid. I took the man out to lunch, for he seemed in need of reconditioning. By the end of our meal he had recovered all his assurance and, indifferent to me, addressed himself to the world at large. Our way took us across some fields, my guide during the walk continuing to vociferate like a madman while gesticulating wildly. On arriving at the house we met Monsieur and Madame Mistral, returning from a promenade. After a short colloquy we were admitted, Madame Mistral, a careful Lyonnaise, first reminding me to make use of the floor-mat. I was then offered a chair in a corner of the poet's study while my intermediary launched out in what appeared to be an agonizing relation of his private woes: to this Mistral listened in evident discomfort. At one moment after a particularly tearful crescendo, the poet, approaching me, murmured in my ear: '*Vous comprenez, Monsieur, notre ami est un peu déséquilibré.*' But I had thought so all along. Feeling at last that our visit should be brought to a close, I made the request for a short sitting before leaving, but the poet would not hear of this. 'But I am not working for the journals,' I explained. This assurance seemed only to clinch his decision: '*Jamais, Monsieur, jamais!*' With a last glance at the statuette on the mantelpiece, a replica of the foul monument at Arles, I took leave of my hero, and shaking off the unbalanced one, caught my train back. Upon reflection I decided that I should have been better dressed for such an enterprise. A neat *complet*, a plush 'Fédora', brown gloves and yellow shoes would perhaps have done the trick. This was by no means the only opportunity I have lost through inattention to detail. In matters of form women are often found to be no less exigent than poets.

Eventually, leaving Martigues, which was becoming industrialized, we acquired a little *mas* at St. Rémy to which we resorted as often as possible, that is to say, every year. In the autumn of 1939, as the clouds of war began to gather ever more menacingly, it became necessary to make a decision. The painter Derain was an habitué of the Hôtel de Provence. He had captured with his brush a neighbouring hill-village, Éygalières, and as if to defy competition, plied to and fro in his fast sports car. Derain scoffed at the idea of war. Even when the Place de la République was already

crowded with horses, requisitioned by the Army, '*il n'y aura pas de guerre*,' he asserted, '*c'est une blague*'. But the signs were clear. None too soon we decamped, and reaching Havre with some difficulty, embarked at the last moment to land at Southampton on the morning of the outbreak. In the course of this journey I would, at every stop, set forth to glean the latest news. The elders of the people, in the greater wisdom associated with grey hair, sought to allay the general fears: '*On s'arrangera; on ne se battra pas*': but such assurances failed to convince. On the way to Havre, while picnicking by the roadside, we were joined by a Norman farmer followed by his wife. Gravely and laconically he announced the order for general mobilization. We shared the bottle we had brought from St. Rémy with this man (his wife refusing). The good wine, a gift from Madame Onde, redolent of the soil of Provence now left so far behind (perhaps for ever), proved a blessing for we did not want to think just yet of all the news meant: the sun seemed to have darkened suddenly. We were a friendly little group of miscellaneous people, confused in origin but ensnared together in one vast web of international insanity.

In 1946 we were able to return. Conditions of living then, though not up to the old standards, were tolerable. The war had left its marks. If these were not spectacular, everything and everybody looked shabbier than usual. Many of the children showed signs of privation. Life was certainly dear, yet the consumption of *pastisse* in the evening seemed to have suffered no diminution. *Pastisse*, a substitute for absinthe, is an infusion of herbs laced with cognac, which on the addition of water turns muddy and tastes like cough mixture. To my mind 'Pernod' taken in the old deliberate French fashion was far preferable. Our little *mas* under the rocks had been disdained by the Germans for it had no electricity or telephone, but the G.I.s had broken into it and, in their cultural hunger, had borne away some of my canvases. Others, however, had been rescued by friends. On the whole, the people had little to complain of from the invaders: there had been no Gestapo at St. Rémy, but the behaviour of some of our Allies and the Parisian refugees came in for criticism; the Maquisards, too, according to Madame Onde, had been '*très méchants*', actually demanding the names of such women as had consorted with Germans. 'But I told them nothing,' she said proudly. 'Would

‘They have had their heads shorn?’ I asked. ‘They’d have been shot’ . . . Black market dealings in a small way were winked at, only big business on these lines arousing resentment. At the end of the Spanish overture to the late global tragedy the poorer population of this agricultural district found means to despatch a trolley of food weekly for the relief of the Spanish loyalists who, fleeing from the vengeance of Franco, had crossed the frontier to be rewarded at the hands of French authority by internment in the atrocious camps of the Pyrenees. There are now industrious Spanish families settled happily at St. Rémy and elsewhere. The St. Rémois, loyal to his father’s memory, have chosen in M. Charles Mauron a worthy successor as Mayor of the town. This courageous spirit, though struck blind, has kept the deeper vision: as a man of letters he has established close relations with English cultural circles. His wife, Marie Mauron, née Roumanille, in a growing series of *romans*, reveals a remarkable talent. She belongs indisputably to the *grande lignée* of Provençal literary tradition.

Charles Maurras, of Martigues, was sometimes to be seen at St. Rémy. As is known, the political views of this philosopher earned him condemnation and imprisonment after the war. I inquired after him of Madame Onde, one of his adherents. She assured me that, though in captivity, he was well cared for and very comfortable. Another distinguished figure now always to be seen at the Grand Hôtel de Provence is the Oriental scholar, Monsieur Steinilbert-Oberlin. ‘*Il connaît le Sanscrit; vous savez c’est la langue d’avant Jesus Christ*,’ remarked Madame Onde informatively. On acquaintance, this lonely old savant, with the profile of a Dante, discloses the charming simplicity of a child.

My habit of an evening usually took me to more popular resorts. In the various cafés of the town I have already made acquaintance with some of the publicans and their clients. Ensconced with a medicinal *pastisse* or a glass of wine, I achieve that agreeable sense of detachment-in-intimacy which the thunderous conversation of the customers, combined with the strains of the accordeon, induces. I note the grouping of the figures, the relation of the heads; and sometimes I will be rewarded by the apparition of a face or part of a face, a gesture or conjunction of forms which I recognize as belonging to a more real and harmonious world than that to which we are accustomed.

As, on an autumn evening, I ascend the road towards the Antiques beyond which our *mas* is situated, the fantastic rocks of Mont Gaussier rise out of the mist as in a Chinese masterpiece, and I despair of landscape painting. Perhaps there will be time to pay a call on the brave Bernard and his amiable family who keep 'Le Robinson', an outlying café much frequented on Sundays when there is music and dancing. Ordinarily the usual little circle of friends will be found at cards. The 'Philosophe' (who keeps goats) will be there to uphold the banner of the Ideal. No *pastiche* for him but always 'un canon' (a glass of wine). Perhaps the 'Parisienne' may look in: we hope not; she is a pretty little woman, certainly, and well educated, but, making no pretence of virtue or even correctitude, her presence and behaviour can only be embarrassing. And now a short ascent by olive groves and vineyards brings me to the Mas de Galeron standing by a group of pines on a spur of the Alpilles. The terrace of the *mas*, above an intervening vineyard, faces Mont Gaussier and the nearer rocks. Here at a megalithic table under the almond tree, we take our meals. The view northwards is wide and comprehensive. Beyond St. Rémy the tall towers of Châteaurenard stand halfway between us and the distant gleam of the Pope's Palace at Avignon. To the north-east rises the bald dome of the Ventoux (our barometer, for the weather prospects are judged by its visibility), and beyond the valley of the Durance, the mountains of Luberon overlook the road to Aix.

Though Provence has recovered its ancient language (unlike the Breton, not yet banned by the Government), it has not escaped the corrosive blight of the Industrial Age. When I visited a prosperous-looking farmhouse, such as the home of Pierre Galeron which seems to promise an interior dignified by the solid and elegant productions of traditional craftsmanship, I suffered a severe shock. Ushered into the *salon*, I found myself in the midst of an appalling agglomeration of 'junk'. These manifestations of modern domestic technology have everywhere displaced the household treasures left by a previous generation, which, long since sold, are now only to be found in museums and the collections of amateurs. Hastily confessing a preference for the more familiar amenities of the kitchen, I was conducted thither and offered a ceremonial and much-needed glass of wine. There is no doubt that the new style is popular and greatly admired, but so,

its day, was the old. How this surprising transvaluation has come about is a matter for speculation, but I may remark that the phenomenon seems to be related to another widespread symptom of social disorder: I refer to the sense of monotony, futility and boredom which, together with general restlessness and unease, marks the end of an epoch.

ROBERT HAMILTON

THE CHALLENGE OF ALDOUS HUXLEY:

'THE PERENNIAL PHILOSOPHY'

THE BACKGROUND

PRACTICALLY every philosophical position has been criticized at one time or other, but whatever position we take up, even that of the most extreme scepticism, we cannot seriously deny that all experience exists in a subject-object relation. Confronting the subject, or self, stands the object, or not-self; and in this division lies the germ of the tremendous conflict between power and love which has torn like a gale through human life from its beginnings—the conflict between the self as potential absolute *reflecting* the object, and the essential limitation of the self *within* the object. The first gives rise to the egoistic tendency which is common to all self-conscious creatures, the desire to seize the object as reflected in the self, and make it (albeit fictitiously, since we can never do so in fact) serve the self, the desire which theologians have put forward as the explanation of the Fall of Man and the rebellion of the angels. The second gives rise to the tendency to transcend and integrate the self in some aspect of the object conceived as an ultimate value that is known and loved and pursued. But everything depends on *what* is conceived to be the ultimate value. If this conception is inadequate, the self is thrown back in despair, from whence arises a greater and more violent egoism.

There seem to be only four possible concrete ultimate values: man, the cosmos, beauty, God. We may call them, broadly, the humanitarian, the cosmological, the aesthetic, and the theistic viewpoints. For the humanitarian, man is the highest object in existence: he is the ultimate value to which all our striving and devotion should be directed. For the cosmologist, the universe is the ultimate value, and is endowed with an innate vitality that generates all things: it is beyond and above man, who must strive, not for himself, but for the furtherance of cosmic evolution. For the aesthetic, beauty, that strange emanation of all things in harmony, is conceived as the ultimate value in that it transcends both man (though he alone is aware of it) and the cosmos (from which it emanates), and is the final end and completest satisfaction of human existence. The fourth conception of ultimate value, God, is an eternal perfect being, the ground of all things, to whom all things, man, the cosmos, and beauty are subordinate. There are, it is true, many conceptions of God, but all are finally reducible to this eternal-perfect ground of reality.

Now man and the cosmos are objective, direct, and undeniable in our experience. Beauty, though concrete in that it is sensuous and immediate, is more elusive. Some have denied that beauty has objective existence, but for the aesthetic (Keats, for example) it is conceived as inhering in all things, while in some obscure sense transcending them. God, as the ground of reality, is more concrete than man or the cosmos, and, as spirit, more elusive than beauty. But God as ultimate value includes all other values in perspective. Indeed, each of these four conceptions of ultimate value ascend inclusively. The conception of man as the ultimate value is the most naïve and unsatisfactory of the four: the cosmos as ultimate includes and goes beyond man; beauty as ultimate includes and transcends both the cosmos and man, and is a kind of halfway house to God; but God as ultimate includes them all in harmony, so that they are known and loved in Him.

One may submit that these conceptions of ultimate value ascend in the life of the individual, not explicitly, but implicitly as feelings. At birth, the infant is a kind of materialist-solipsist, scarcely aware of the subject-object relation at all, and regarding existence as an extension of its own body; but almost immediately it becomes aware of the object in the form of other humans—parents or guardians, nurse, relatives, so that, for the first few

ears, man (in the form of this small circle) is supreme in the infant's life. Later, the child becomes aware of the overshadowing power of the cosmos; and still later, with the developing imagination, the sense of beauty is awakened in the adolescent. The final stage of development is (or should be, if there is no inhibition) the theistic. Although the previous stages may have been accompanied by religious instruction, religion is not, in the young, integrally understood, and remains primarily a code of conduct with God vaguely identified as man, the cosmos, and beauty. Normally, this persists until near adulthood, when the reasoning power is sufficiently developed to grasp the full idea of God. There are exceptions to all these stages of development, as in the case of the precocious child saint, but, broadly, human growth seems to follow these lines.

There may be a similar development and ascent in the race, though it is much less obvious, and is often vague and confused. It seems likely that absolute primitives are, like the newly born, purely materialists; but we have no knowledge of them, and the earliest people known to us seem to have a very narrow humanitarian outlook within their own tribe. Only later does the cosmological or magical stage come in. When civilization begins to appear, the aesthetic and imaginative outlook becomes pre-eminent. But not until the appearance of the great philosophers and religious teachers (about the sixth century B.C.) does man enter upon the final theistic stage.

There have, however, always been individuals, distinguished and mediocre, who have advocated one or other conceptions of ultimate value less than God; and in the neurotic modern age godless values have competed violently. But all have been proved inadequate. God alone can at once transcend and integrate the self, and He alone is big enough to overcome our terrifying egoism—that egoism which, apart from its rare expression as cold-blooded arrogance or wilful spiritual pride, masquerades in a thousand forms, in indolence, cynicism, sexual exaggeration and perversion, coldness, assertiveness, and all forms of neurosis. If man is believed to be the ultimate value, either a sentimental attitude bearing no resemblance to disinterested charity or a cynical aloofness results. There is nothing in the record of man, or of any man, to give any ground for finding in him the transcendence of the individual self ('Why should I love my neighbour,' asked

Freud); and at best the humanitarian achieves, not integration, but a remote ethical stoicism. The cosmologist fails no less. The evolutionary or dialectical movement of the cosmos, he says, is supreme. And what is the result? In the majority of cases, totalitarianism. Man, because he is less than the cosmos, does not count as an individual: he is viewed collectively as a *means* to a racial or a proletarian stage of world development. It is true that there is an academic and scientific cosmologism which seeks a more individual and less-violent approach, but it is inconsistent, and contains implicitly either a vague humanitarianism or a still-vaguer theism. In its worst and most consistent form, totalitarianism, the cosmological outlook violently increases egoism, as we see in the countries that have adopted it: in its weakest and least-consistent form, it produces a superficial and emasculated outlook typical of some of the materialistic scientists of this country. The sensitive aesthetic, for whom beauty is the ultimate value in a bad and chaotic world, tends to fall into the reverse condition of the cosmologist by isolating himself, and losing touch with social movements. E. M. Forster could not effectively answer J. D. Bernal in 'The Challenge of Our Time' broadcasts, because, although he had a higher and better conception of ultimate value, his outlook was too isolated. The aesthetic can often do much to transcend his own egoism; but aestheticism cannot help others, and cannot attack the social evils of the world. The individual is isolated in the contemplation of an impersonal, yet highly personalizing value. Many intuitive naturalists, such as W. H. Hudson, may be described as aesthetes rather than as cosmologists. They achieve a limited good, but are too subjective. But the conception of God as the ultimate value alone can, and does (when God is pursued with sufficient intensity), lead to a complete integration. Why, then, in view of the overwhelming evidence for His existence from reason and experience, is it possible to reject Him? Critics of the aesthetic position do not deny that beauty exists, even though only subjectively; but critics of theism reject God as an illusion. The answer is that God is rejected precisely *because* He alone can transcend and integrate the self, and overcome our egoism. God differs from other ultimate values in that all except Him are limited. He is absolute; and the egoistic part of us does not want to be overcome. As C. S. Lewis says, God is the thing we most desire and the thing we most want to keep away. If God alone

can integrate the self, and yet does not exist, our need for Him is like an eye in darkness and hunger in a barren world.

But can it be said that those who pursue an ultimate value less than God do so on account of a hidden egoism, a desire to keep Him away? Not always. In many cases temperament, or fixation at a less-than-adult level, or vocation may be a predisposing factor. Excessive absorption in politics or psychology may lead to the conception of man as the ultimate value; in science, to the cosmos; in art, to beauty. It is, however, significant that in philosophy (where reason is raised to its highest level) and religion (where selfless love is the aim) the witness to God is found.

Obviously, a man's beliefs cannot be pinned down to vocation alone, or to any one cause: the above examples are hypothetical, and there are many men of all callings who have more or less held to conceptions of ultimate value less than God. To take four examples from modern English literature: Galsworthy, Shaw, Charles Morgan, and Aldous Huxley. Galsworthy was a typical modern humanitarian, with much of the aloofness, provincialism, and sentimentality that goes with that outlook; Shaw is a cosmologist of the best type, with his creative evolution and world socialism; Charles Morgan represents the mainly aesthetic approach, seeking an absolute beauty emanating from, but beyond, the world of sense; while in his later work Aldous Huxley has turned to an uncompromising theism which challenges the values of the other three. The fullest theism is found in the Christian writers and prophets of our day; but Huxley is peculiarly interesting in view of his progress from an almost nihilistic scepticism, through all the above conceptions of ultimate value, to his present theistic position, and also for the immense future possibilities his work contains.

ALDOUS HUXLEY

Though his conception of religion is still too esoteric, and though he fails to appreciate the historical fact of Christianity and the need for large-scale religious organization, Huxley's theocentrism is a challenge to the modern world. But in a sense all his work is a challenge. Save in the very earliest books, such as *Chrome Yellow*, he has never been a detached and sceptical observer like Somerset Maugham, though superficially he may have appeared so. The early Huxley felt very keenly the evil and futility of much of

human life—too keenly perhaps, since the Manichaeian tendency of his present position, i.e., the tendency to regard the world as evil over and against God, derives from his early pessimism. His early challenge was to hold up a somewhat distorting mirror to evil, and to force us to take stock of ourselves. Perhaps his attitude might be called defiance rather than challenge at this stage. There was in it a good deal of the defiance of D. H. Lawrence, who greatly influenced the youthful Huxley. Now, having found the answer in God, what was once defiance has become a ringing challenge, all the more powerful because of what has preceded it.

Huxley's universality of mind and encyclopaedic knowledge, together with his sensibility and capacity for experience, make his challenge formidable. He is, we feel, much less likely to be mistaken than the specialist. His development has been a great adventure, and among the milestones of his long pilgrimage the novels *Point Counter Point* and *Time Must Have a Stop*, and the essays *Do What You Will* and *The Perennial Philosophy*, are outstanding. *Point Counter Point*, the epitome of the early period, is probably his finest work of fiction. Though too long for its material, and rather too much like an essay (a weakness of all Huxley's fiction), it reveals the breadth of his understanding together with an astonishing fecundity of thought, technical skill and originality. It uniquely sums up an age—the period between the two wars; but it is much more than a great period piece. It lays bare the evil and self-inflicted suffering of human life as few other books have done before, or will do again. The philosophy behind *Point Counter Point* was summed up in the essay *Do What You Will*. The latest novel, *Time Must Have a Stop*, is far less good as fiction, but it is a memorable work. Nobody who had read it with any insight could agree with the critic who dismissed it as beginning with a re-hash of *Antic Hay* stuff, and ending with a boring ideological essay. It is consistent throughout, being held together by the ideological chapters describing the purgatory of a hedonistic egoist as he beholds the worthlessness of his life in relation to God. It has been followed by Huxley's most recent work, *The Perennial Philosophy*, in which its ideas have been consistently and fully worked out. The titles of the two novels are curiously related to the two great stages of Huxley's development. *Point Counter Point*, which means the return of time on itself, sums up the early Huxley, preoccupied with the here and now of things,

with the multiplicity of existence in the present; *Time Must Have* *Stop* sums up the present Huxley, whose philosophy is the transcendence of time in the spiritual and eternal.

Huxley's passage through the three stages of humanitarianism, cosmologism and aestheticism is revealed in *Point Counter Point*. We find elements of the scepticism and vague humanitarianism of his earliest works combined with something of the cosmologism of Lawrence (portrayed in the book as Mark Rampion), while at the same time a sense of the quasi-spiritual value of beauty subdues the Lawrencian gospel, and tends to transform it into an aestheticism that is more than hinted at towards the end of the book. But never, at this stage, is Huxley genuinely convinced of the ultimacy of any value. There is no suggestion that the egoism depicted with such irony in these pages can ever be transcended. The results of man's imprisonment in his own ego is the main theme, though the sensual aspect of egoism is rather overstressed—a further example of Huxley's Manichaean tendency. The quotation from Fulke Greville, which precedes the book, is an epitome of his attitude at this time:

Oh, wearisome condition of humanity,
Born under one law, to another bound,
Vainly begot and yet forbidden vanity,
Created sick, commanded to be sound.

What meaneth nature by these diverse laws,
Passion and reason, self-division's cause?

Evil and futility are personified in the person of Spandrell, whose wickedness derives from a perverted obsession with the sense of sin.

'Robbed gradually by habit both of his active enjoyment and of his active sense of wrong-doing (which had always been a part of his pleasure), Spandrell had turned with a kind of desperation to the refinements of vice. But the refinements of vice do not produce corresponding refinements of feeling. The contrary is in fact true; the more refined in its far-fetched extravagance, the more uncommon and abnormal the vice, the more dully and hopelessly unemotional does the practice of it become. Imagination may exert itself in devising the most improbable variations on the normal sexual theme; but the emotional product of all the varieties of orgy is always the same—a dull sense of humiliation and abasement.'

But Spandrell's vice is not committed solely for itself, but as a challenge to God (in whom he does not explicitly believe) to manifest Himself. He argues subconsciously—surely you will strike now as a protest against this still more deadly and still more deliberately committed sin. But God fails to appear, and at the end, in desperation, after having murdered a political leader in cold blood, brutally, and without motive, Spandrell makes a final attempt at illumination in listening to a record of one of Beethoven's last quartets. He is interrupted by the shots of the leader's followers, come at his own invitation, to avenge the blood of the man he has killed, and so dies, as he had lived, in darkness.

The opening essay of *Do What You Will* (a kind of ideological variation on the themes of *Point Counter Point*), entitled 'One and Many', sets out the central idea of the whole book, which is that reality, though perhaps ultimately one, is manifest in diversity, and life, to be experienced fully, must be lived in diversity. Over-concentration on the one, especially in the spiritual realm, has been disastrous, and has emasculated human nature. With a characteristic mixture of brilliance and detachment, Huxley makes a plea for a return to pagan multiplicity. It is a curious experience, in re-reading this essay, to realize how completely his subsequent progress has been in the opposite direction—from the many as experienced in the world to the one as experienced in God; but here it is theocentric mysticism that comes in for his most contemptuous criticism. He is only a degree less contemptuous of abstract reasoning, with its bloodless scientific unity opposed to the multiplicity of concrete experience. It may seem paradoxical that so great an 'intellectual' should deride the intellect (he was much influenced by Lawrence at the time, as we have seen); but the paradox is partly resolved when we reflect that he was never an intellectual for intellect's sake, but always for experience. Yet he is by nature intellectual, and in this differs sharply from Lawrence who was temperamentally emotional and primitive, and to that extent genuinely anti-intellectual. Huxley sums up his position at the end of the first essay:

The apostles laboured, the martyrs died in torment, the philosophers thought sublime thoughts, by precept and example the scholars and men of science proclaimed the beauties of the 'higher life', the sociologists untiringly inculcated the duty of good citizenship, and all agreed that

God is one and a spirit, and that man's first duty is to resemble God. To what end? That men might become purer, they would have answered, better, more than men. But what has actually occurred? Trying to live superhumanly, men have sunk, in all but the purely mental sphere, towards a kind of sub-humanity that it would be an undeserved compliment to call bestial. Turned against Life, they have worshipped Death in the form of spirituality, intellectualism, and at last mere efficiency.

The other essays develop this idea in relation to the life and work of Spinoza, Swift, St. Francis of Assisi, Rasputin, and Robespierre, by way of The Talkies, Hotel Life on the Riviera, The Holy Face of Lucca, Revolutions, and Fashions in Love. The great final essay on Pascal, whom he sees as the archetype of the 'One and Many' problem—a many-sided genius ruined by a fanatical devotion to the one—is an epitome of the whole book. In a sense, the form of the book is analogous to its content. Outwardly a collection of diverse essays on many subjects, it is inwardly a unified expression, under many aspects, of the Life-Worshipping Philosophy (as Huxley calls it), and thus reflects its own thesis of the 'one and many'.

After *Point Counter Point* and *Do What You Will*, Huxley groped his way forward, but could not find the exit. The second world war came nearer, and he took up the propaganda of pacifism which formed the climax of *Eyeless in Gaza*. He followed the methods of Mathias Alexander, and developed them philosophically on his own lines in *Ends and Means*. And now, gradually, his learned and sophisticated, but psychologically receptive, mind began at last to see the dim outline of a reality beyond man, beyond the cosmos, beyond beauty: the reality of God. Just as we see something of the influence of Lawrence in the early Huxley, and of Mathias Alexander in the middle period, it is possible that the latest phase owes something to his great friend Gerald Heard, who travelled a very similar road from the standpoint of science, and has reached a similar goal.

At first, as we gather from certain passages in *Eyeless in Gaza*, Huxley inclined to a neo-oriental view of God as impersonal, a point of view which was developed in *After Many a Summer*, and still further and more philosophically in *Grey Eminence*. In this study of religion and politics, as he calls it, the early note of

defiance, and the bewilderment of the middle period, are replaced by the note of challenge, which accounts for the irritating effect the book has had on facile scientific optimists and sociological fanatics. Significantly and symbolically the new insight revealed in this book went with a return of Huxley's oversight. After being nearly blind for years, his sight has almost completely returned; and, like the spiritual insight he has gained, it has been brought about mainly by his own perseverance. The culminating point in his fiction is *Time Must Have a Stop*, which reveals a fuller, more concrete theism than any previous work, and a belief in survival after death. In spite of his orientalism, Huxley has always had a profound and sympathetic interest in the great Christian mystics such as St. John of the Cross; and in this latest novel the Christian note is more insistent. The Christian saints are more frequently quoted and held up as examples. The message is that only a selfless and utter absorption in God can transcend and integrate the self, and solve the problems of the modern world.

As Spandrell, the perverted mystic, is the focal point of all the problems raised in *Point Counter Point*, so Bruno, the true mystic, the central figure of *Time Must Have a Stop*, is the focal point of Huxley's present philosophy. Bruno is not very well drawn—certainly, from the purely fictional point of view, less well than Spandrell, perhaps because it is so much harder to create a convincing saint than a sinner. Huxley's identification of religion with a certain remoteness and transcendentalism makes the task of characterization difficult. Bruno lacks the humanism and vitality of the authentic Christian saint. But Spandrell and Bruno are alike in their sense of evil—with the important difference that Spandrell is the prisoner of evil, with no gleam of light in his prison save a vague intuition of beauty which filters through the window of his dark soul like a thin and dusty ray of light from the setting sun, while Bruno is triumphant over evil in the love of God.

Like *Point Counter Point*, the book is prefaced by a quotation—this time from Shakespeare (from which the title also is taken):

But thought's the slave of life, and life's time's fool
And time, that takes survey of all the world,
Must have a stop.

At the end, Sebastian Barnack, the young poet who has been

influenced by Bruno, and has at last slowly and painfully begun follow his teaching, meditates upon this quotation and its spiritual significance.

'Three clauses, of which the twentieth century has paid attention only to the first. Thought's enslavement to life is one of our favourite themes. Bergson and the Pragmatists, Adler and Freud, the Dialectical Materialism boys and the Behaviourists—all tootle their variations on it. Mind is nothing but a tool for making tools; controlled by unconscious forces, either sexual or aggressive; the product of social and economic pressures; a bundle of conditioned reflexes.

'All quite true, so far as it goes; but false if it goes no further. For, obviously, if mind is only some kind of nothing-but, none of its affirmations can make any claim to general validity. But all nothing-but philosophies make such claims. Therefore they can't be true; for if they were true, that would be the proof that they were false. Thought's the slave of life—undoubtedly. But if it weren't also something else, we couldn't make even this partially valid generalization.

'The significance of the second clause is mainly practical. Life's time's fool. By merely elapsing time makes nonsense of all life's conscious planning and scheming. No considerable action has ever had all or nothing but the results expected of it. Except under controlled conditions, or in circumstances where it is possible to ignore individuals and consider only large numbers and the law of averages, any kind of accurate foresight is impossible. In all actual human situations more variables are involved than the human mind can take account of; and with the passage of time the variables tend to increase in number and change their character. These facts are perfectly familiar and obvious. And yet the only faith of a majority of twentieth-century Europeans and Americans is faith in the Future—the bigger and better Future, which they *know* that Progress is going to produce for them, like rabbits out of a hat. For the sake of what their faith tells them about a Future time, which their reason assures them to be completely unknowable, they are prepared to sacrifice their only tangible possession, the Present. . . .

'But Hotspur's summary has a final clause: time must have a stop. And not only *must*, as an ethical imperative and an eschatological hope, but also *does* have a stop, in the indicative tense, as a matter of brute experience. It is only by taking the fact of eternity into account that we can deliver thought from its slavery to life. And it is only by deliberately paying our attention and our primary allegiance to eternity that we can prevent time from turning our lives into a pointless or diabolic foolery. The divine Ground is a timeless reality. . . .'

Sebastian reflects that one of the tasks of the coming year will be for him to 'discuss the relationships, for example, between the Ground and its higher manifestations—between the Godhead and the personal God . . .'

The chapter from which this extract is taken is one of the profoundest and closest pieces of thinking Huxley has given us, written in his invariably pellucid and racy language. In the analysis of this passage we see something of his own progress. Thought's enslavement to life was the gospel that emerged from *Point Counter Point*. The only character who can be said to have offered anything constructive (Rampion, based on Lawrence) regarded the intellect in its abstractive and analytic form as the cause of most of our ills, and sought to realize the full man in submitting thought to life in all its multiplicity. Huxley also summed up this in *Do What You Will*, as we saw. But his sense that 'life's time's fool' mocked at this attitude, and together with his scepticism and sense of the 'otherness' of beauty, made him stand back from Lawrence's gospel even while admiring it; and this scepticism paved the way for the acceptance of the final clause, 'time must have a stop'.

Sebastian's remark, in *Time Must Have a Stop*, that he must discuss the relations 'between the Godhead and the personal God' is Huxley's own. The identification of some aspect of himself with one of his characters is a trick he has often resorted to. Quarles (an undoubted mask of Huxley) says amusingly in *Point Counter Point*, 'But why draw the line at one novelist inside your novel? Why not a second inside his? And a third inside the novel of the second. And so on to infinity, like those advertisements of Quaker Oats where there's a quaker holding a box of oats, on which is a picture of another quaker holding another box of oats, on which,

etc., etc.' Huxley has now fulfilled Sebastian's task, and the results are set down in his latest book, *The Perennial Philosophy*, the central idea of which is that all the great religious teachers in all ages and in all places have shown an uncanny agreement, beneath extremely diverse mental and temperamental outlooks, on the nature of God and the way to Him. Right at the opening of the book, in the first paragraph of the Introduction, he states his case:

Philosophia perennis—the phrase was coined by Leibniz; but the thing—the metaphysic that recognizes a divine Reality substantial to the world of things and lives and minds; the psychology that finds in the soul something similar to, or even identical with, divine Reality; the ethic that places man's final end in the knowledge of the immanent and transcendent Ground of all being—the thing is immemorial and universal.

The immediate and superficial reply which occurs to the materialist is that all this agreement may be explained as a purely subjective condition, universal only because endemic to man up to his present stage of evolution; a pathological state that arises out of the structure of the psyche in its response to the conflict with reality. Freud has argued on similar lines in *The Future of an Illusion*. But Huxley has effectively answered this criticism elsewhere: 'a tree is known by its fruits'. (This, and 'means determine ends', are the motto themes of all his latest work, and continually recur.) Now the fruits of an illusion are pathological, but the fruits of the theism taught by the saints and mystics are an increased understanding and charity. And since reason and love are the supreme qualities of humanity which distinguish men from the brutes, that which has been taught by rational and devoted men and which increases understanding and loving kindness to an exceptional degree, cannot be an illusion.

Huxley reinforces his thesis by a wide and varied number of historical examples from the teaching of the saints and mystics—in fact, the book is a carefully chosen collection of such examples with a commentary. The case would probably have been made stronger by the inclusion of examples from the philosophers who also reinforce theism from the purely intellectual standpoint. Indeed, the overwhelming case for theism is that, with few exceptions, the greatest *reasoners* of all time, the philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Descartes, Kant, Hegel,

Whitehead, as well as the greatest *lovers*, the saints and mystics, have steadily borne witness to God. Those who have reasoned the most, and those who have loved the most, have seen God, since uninhibited reason and love inevitably move towards their Origin. But Huxley has always rather despised the philosophers—one of the positions in *Do What You Will* that he has not abandoned. He might, however, with profit have included some of the quasi-philosophical pagan 'saints' such as Marcus Aurelius and Epictetus, since they were undoubtedly men of good life, and their teaching on God and human conduct shows agreement on fundamentals with the mystics, though on a slightly lower level.

The commentaries are profound and deeply sincere, yet always simple and clear, as invariably with Huxley's writing. The contemporary note of his thought and style is stimulating beside the archaic quality of many of the quotations, and throws them into relief. But in some ways, hard to define, Huxley's style is less vivid than formerly, perhaps because the quality of his writing is less personal. Style is personality, and personality is style; and when the tendency is to sink the personality in a gospel of non-attachment, the style loses something of its highly coloured quality.

The question of the personality of God that vexed Sebastian is one of the supreme problems that Huxley has set himself to tackle, and in this book he suggests that personality is a real aspect of God who, nevertheless, in His ultimacy, may be beyond person. There has always been a tendency in oriental religion to overlook the problem of personality, and to blur the distinction between the self and God (the self and the Self), and one finds it here. No doubt Huxley is still uncertain; but the problem is urgent. On the subject of immortality he seems to suggest an impersonal union with God after many incarnations, yet elsewhere he seems to argue for personal survival on Christian lines. Many other important questions are very obscure in *The Perennial Philosophy*. Much of the obscurity comes from the nature of the problems themselves, some of which have vexed the greatest minds and troubled the greatest hearts from man's beginning—such as the relation of being and knowledge. Huxley refers to this problem many times, but has not made much progress with it. He speaks of 'knowledge as a function of being', yet the whole book is an argument for the reverse position, that states of being can be altered by changes in

knowledge. Thus if a materialist were convinced by Huxley's argument his whole being would undergo a startling change. No doubt Huxley would answer, with many spiritual teachers, that in this, and similar questions, to probe too far and expect complete certitude is a form of pride, and stands in the way of progress to God. This attitude is sound in relation to some religious problems—particularly the problem of God and evil which Huxley is inclined to shelve. Unfortunately, he seems altogether to have missed the meaning of the Atonement. In general, he appreciates the theocentrism and moral good in Christianity without grasping its historical significance. He thinks of religion, too exclusively in terms of the highest sanctity and mystical experience, strangely forgetful of the fact that the vast millions of mankind, for whom religion is intended and Christianity founded, can only approach God through the humanistic channels of everyday life with its multiplicity and fullness. A little more of the *Do What You Will* outlook is needed to mix with *The Perennial Philosophy*. It is no answer to say, with the modernists, that Christianity is historically redundant but a necessary myth for the masses to lead them to a higher spirituality. If man needs the kind of everyday religion that Christianity professes to be, it is only reasonable to suppose that God, if He revealed Himself at all, would give him such a religion, and that it would be objectively true. Mystical theocentrism is for the few; but for the average man the popular way is right. Huxley cannot see the need for a Church that includes the mystic no less than the peasant lighting a candle before a nodding statue. He pays generous tribute to the universality of Catholicism without seeing why it is universal. Because of this, he is unable to explain why the great Catholic mystics increased in devotion to their faith in all its details as they advanced in holiness, since if he is right, by an inevitable logic, they should have grown out of it. An abiding weakness of Huxley as a thinker, in spite of his immense knowledge and clarity of utterance, is his lack of logical architecture. No doubt this is partly innate, and partly the result of the lack of philosophical training and discipline from which so many literary prophets suffer. But it may also derive from his empiricism, and particularly, at the moment, from the powerful influence of oriental religion. This oriental vagueness is revealed in the quotations from the Indian and Chinese saints, inspired and

light-shedding though they are. The quotations from the Christian saints are much clearer and more logical in the majority of cases.

Yet, whatever weaknesses this book may have for the Christian, it stands out as a challenge to the materialist, the sceptic, the evolutionary utopian, and all the frivolous and self-seeking multitudes of our restless age. Huxley's diagnosis of our ills has always been acute, and there is here the same uncanny sensitivity which touches the danger spots of the modern disease, so that we wince under the irony and are forced out of our complacency. Huxley's mind was always receptive to the ingression of eternity; and perhaps because, beneath all the sophistication and irony, he possessed a fundamental humility, he found what he sought. 'Ask, and it shall be given; knock, and it shall be opened.' What he has found is not (as yet) the fullness of Christian truth, hence there is still a remoteness in his conception of religion that only the Incarnation could completely overcome. But he has found the God of 'the perennial philosophy', and his challenge is the challenge of Shakespeare and Tolstoy, and of all the greatest literary prophets and artists; the challenge of the saints and mystics of east and west; the challenge of our age and of all ages. 'Seek first the kingdom of God, and all else shall be given to you.'

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